

The

Good News

**Obedying
God's Government**
by Herbert W. Armstrong See Page 2

AUGUST 1979

Living by Faith

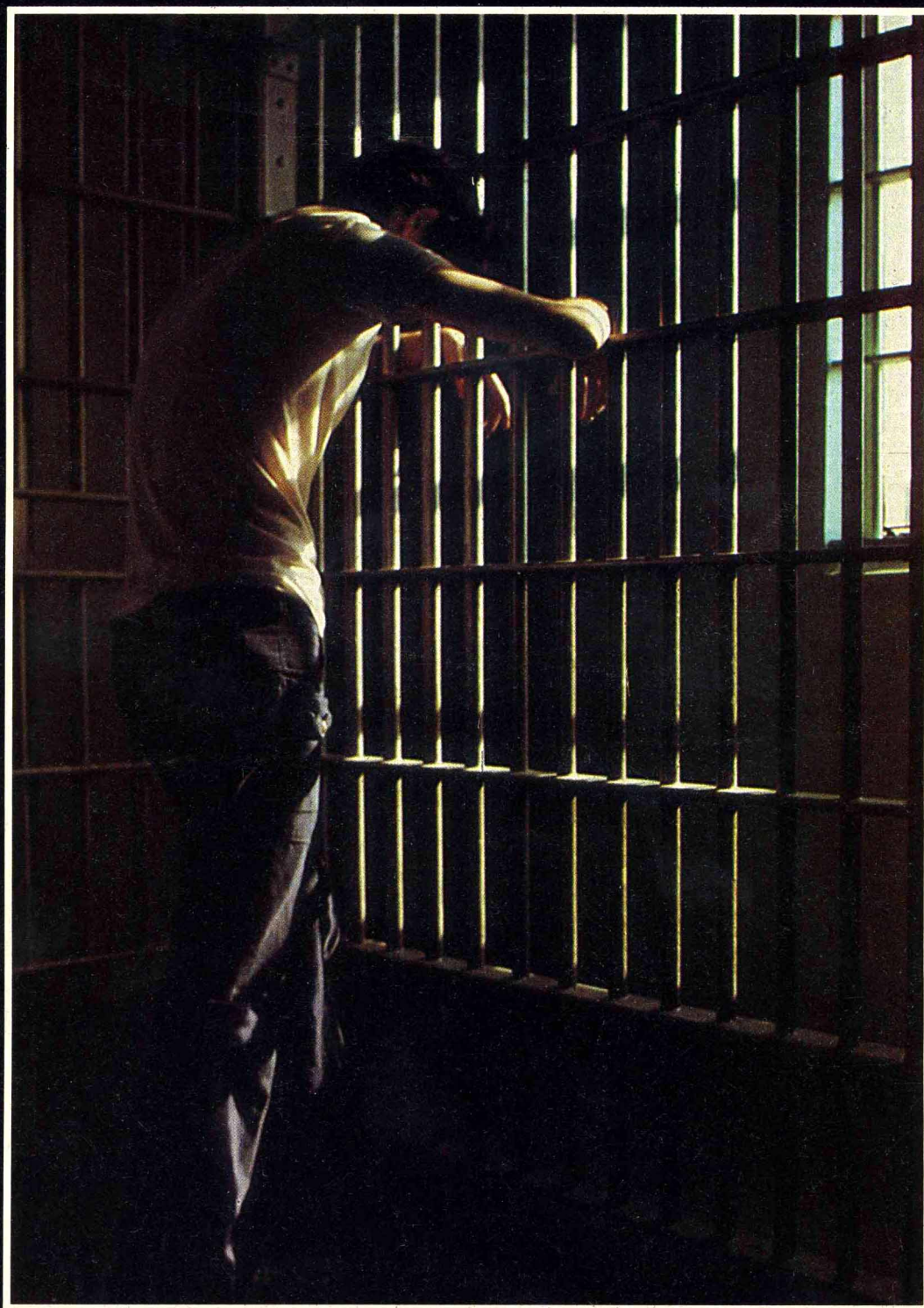
Spiritual
Vision

Who is My
Neighbor?

Christian
Meditation

When
the Light
Goes Out

**'I Was in
Prison
and You
Visited
Me'**



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COVER: In prison, loneliness can be your closest companion. Christ understands the pain of imprisonment and the power of someone who really cares to relieve that suffering. That's why He gave the parable in Matthew 25. See article beginning on page 8. Photo by Mike Hendrickson.

The Plain Truth About Stanley R. Rader

By Herbert W. Armstrong

WHY I keep Mr. Rader on as my assistant, in spite of the biggest character-assassination campaign in God's Church.

WHY, I ask, WHY has Stanley R. Rader been persecuted, with a bitter campaign of character assassination against him as no other man in or associated with the Church?

Those who have HATED Mr. Rader could not tell you *WHY*. I think it's time the Church membership and pastors come to grips with this question.

The fountain source that has spewed out this bitter hatred is my own son, Garner Ted Armstrong.

But if I ask this, that or the other minister or Church member, "*WHY?*" they *can't answer!*

Much of this character assassination has taken place in the faculty locker room in Pasadena, guzzling beer. Little personal snide remarks have built up a giant wall against Stanley Rader.

I look at the "fruits," and they are virtually all **VERY GOOD!**

There's an old saying to the effect that he who steals my purse steals trash, but he who besmears my character steals the most precious and valuable thing I have.

But, even though snide remarks, character-assassination statements have been freely spewed out, I still

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WHAT GOD NEVER DID-NEVER WILL-ALLOW TO HAPPEN

This thought came to me as I was eating breakfast this morning: In all this world's history God has never started an important Work or special activity through a chosen human, and then, after that special accomplishment is well advanced, ALLOWED His chosen human leader to be overthrown by Satan — or in any way to turn false!

Yet those promoted high *within* that Work or special activity for God, *have* been allowed to turn false, against God's chosen leader.

The example of Moses

Start with Moses — specially called and chosen by God to lead the Israelite slaves out of Egypt and to the promised land. Moses was human. He had human faults and weaknesses — but he also had human strengths, and God gave him the extra strength needed.

Moses' brother, Aaron, had been elevated high as Moses' spokesman (since Moses had a speech impediment — he stuttered). Aaron, with his sister Miriam, did once turn false and say to Moses, in effect: "Who do you think you are? We are just as high — on a level with you." God punished.

Then there was Korah. He and others associated with him in a rebellion had been raised to high position in the nation Israel — a nation emigrating from Egypt with 2½ or more million people (600,000 men age 20 and above plus women and children).

There was real organization within that nomadic nation, but none equal to Moses in top authority under God — and no No. 2 men, in authority

over all except Moses. Yet Korah and his fellow dissidents were not satisfied with their already lofty positions — they wanted to GET — take to themselves MORE AUTHORITY, EQUAL TO MOSES.

God caused the earth to swallow them up.

But the man God had prepared in advance — the man God chose as His instrument in starting the tremendous project of moving some 2½ million people to the promised land — was never allowed by God to go wrong.

Yet Moses was abused, accused, criticized.

The same with Joshua, the man God chose to take over after Moses' job was completed, and pilot God's people across the Jordan River into the promised land. Joshua remained FAITHFUL!

Jesus Christ appointed Peter chief apostle to Israel, and Paul chief apostle to the gentiles. They were falsely accused, opposed, criticized — but neither was allowed by CHRIST to turn wrong — though some under them did turn wrong.

The Philadelphia era

In our time, God first prepared, then called me unmistakably, to raise up the Philadelphia era of God's Church — at this END TIME just before the end of this world — and to proclaim the GOOD NEWS of the world tomorrow and the Kingdom of God. That was 46 years ago — though God called and chose me 52 years ago.

But what has happened in that 46 years? My elder son, Richard David, was taken in death, dying "in harness" on a baptizing tour — the most loved of the ministers in God's Church, because he exuded so much LOVE!

But then my second son came along, "prepared" in all the evils of

enlisted men in the U.S. Navy, and (this was MY mistake, not yet then realizing God has never used a No. 2 man in authority), I delegated a considerable authority to Ted.

But he went way beyond what I delegated and assumed TOTAL AUTHORITY, trying to cut me off completely — which meant also cutting off *all* above him (which meant cutting off Jesus Christ and God Almighty). There were others who were either POWER-hungry or money hungry (probably mostly the former).

I came to LOVE, to ENTRUST AUTHORITY to, to honor and respect, Albert Portune, David Antion, C. Wayne Cole, Raymond Cole, Ron Dart — all men once high in God's Work today, as Korah and his fellows were in Moses' day. And now WHERE ARE THEY? All are trying to DESTROY the very WORK OF GOD they once sought to support, as they climbed the ladder of success.

Today the living Christ, Head of the Church, is SETTING IT BACK ON GOD'S TRACK, yet these dissidents would have you think Christ's apostle and even the Church has gone sour — and, like vultures of the sky, they figuratively hover over it, waiting for this, that and the other member to DIE SPIRITUALLY, so they may gobble up the remains! They no longer seek to build — they seek to DESTROY!

Well, brethren, just where do we stand AT THE MOMENT? During the past year this Church of the living God has been at least 75 percent set back on God's track. We are getting frighteningly close to the END of this age.

This Church was drifting into a Laodicean condition. Incidentally, both the Sardis and the Laodicean eras of the Church were GOD'S CHURCHES — NOT SATAN'S!

Someone spread the false rumor that I have said these others were or
(Continued on page 27)

Which Shall We Obey? The Civil Government or God's?

Certain dissident voices have been raised, since Jan. 3, deceiving God's people about obeying the government of man!

By Herbert W. Armstrong

DO WE UNDERSTAND that the GOVERNMENT OF GOD once ruled the entire earth?

Do we understand that Satan's major thrust is to turn us *against* the GOVERNMENT OF GOD? That government is based on THE LAW OF GOD, and the LAW OF GOD is predominant in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation?

Do we REALLY understand that THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD is at this moment being administered on the earth in ONE PLACE ONLY — in the

WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD? Do we realize that GOD HIMSELF raised up this era of His Church, even though He used His chosen apostle — and that it is NOT, in any way, the government of MAN?

Do we realize that the one prime point Satan uses to keep YOU out of God's Kingdom is to attack THE LAW OF GOD, which is the foundation of the GOVERNMENT OF GOD?

Do you realize that the civil governments of man, masterminded by Satan, *have ALWAYS fought against the government of GOD?*

There comes a time when you have to decide WHERE ARE YOUR LOYALTIES. One such time was Jan. 3 and immediately following. Some very few ministers shouted out words to the effect that "WE MUST OBEY THE GOVERNMENT OF MAN, NOT the CHURCH OF GOD!"

In the history of mankind on earth we have come down to the FINAL QUESTION: *WHO* IS LORD? — CAESAR OR CHRIST?

You have to decide — even as the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the scribes had to decide between Barabbas and CHRIST! There is today just ONE CHURCH ONLY where the GOVERNMENT OF GOD is being administered — and that is in the WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD!

It's time we GET THIS STRAIGHT! Satan has been using some to teach you FALSELY!

What was Jesus' teaching? What was His EXAMPLE? Some have been putting a TWIST on that and causing division in God's Church.

Take time to UNDERSTAND your position in relation to the GOVERNMENT OF MAN and also your relationship to the GOVERNMENT OF GOD!

God's government on earth before Adam

The government of GOD did once rule the earth. This was before Adam was created! God placed a super archangel, the cherub LUCIFER, on the throne of the whole world, then inhabited by angels! How long GOD's GOVERNMENT was administered we do not know. But this Lucifer, the highest, most powerful and mighty being God could create, next to Himself, was PERFECT in all his ways, UNTIL iniquity (LAW TRANSGRESSION) was found in him (Ezek.

28:15). Now he is SATAN the DEVIL! And he is deceiving some of God's simple and trusting people on this very matter of GOVERNMENT!

Many times recently I have mentioned that if you tune in your TV set on a movie that is two thirds over, not knowing what went before and led up to the point you tuned in, you do not really understand what you are seeing.

God's government rejected

So take time to get this exceedingly brief BACKGROUND. After Lucifer had become SATAN the archdeceiver, God created the first humans — Adam and Eve. They rejected the GOVERNMENT OF GOD, and God drove them out of Eden and barred them and all humans to be born from and after them from access to God (Gen. 3:22-24), except the VERY FEW God has specially called.

For some 6,000 years mankind has lived under GOVERNMENTS OF MAN influenced by SATAN and CUT OFF FROM GOD!

Yet, even so, man, in his personal life, is commanded to BE SUBJECT TO (not always to OBEY) the government of man. It is true that the New Testament tells us that, in the regular course of each person's life, he is to be SUBJECT TO the human civil laws and governmental powers over him. The Church of God has always taught that.

But being "subject to" does not of itself mean "OBEY." When it comes to killing in war, a drafted man may be "SUBJECT TO" man's law by submitting to the PENALTY of man's law! Thus he may "BE SUBJECT TO" the law of man, while OBEYING GOD rather than man.

Jesus Christ's example

Now look to the example set and the teaching of Jesus. He said (Matt. 22:21), "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which ARE Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's."

HUMAN GOVERNMENT has ALWAYS persecuted God and those who follow God's ways. In Jesus' day, Judea was part of the Roman Empire. Although the Roman government kept a small contingent of soldiers there and a Roman governor or local king, they delegated all the more mi-

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HOW SATAN INJECTS FALSE DOCTRINES

By Herbert W. Armstrong

In God's Church in our time I have seen how Satan cleverly and without their knowledge uses humans to destroy GOD'S TRUTH and inject false or counterfeit doctrines instead.

The record, in our time, has been written. And the record has been written of how it was done in the first three centuries of the Church.

The Church of God started out, A.D. 31, under the original apostles, taught personally by Jesus Christ, pure in doctrines.

Yet by about A.D. 58, the apostle Paul wrote to the churches of Galatia: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel . . . but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of [Jesus] Christ" (Gal. 1:6-7).

To the church at Corinth the same thing was happening. To them Paul wrote, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted" (II Cor. 11:3). Today, if one should suggest that a brother or minister in the Church has unsuspectingly been led in any degree by Satan, he will rise up in furious indignation and angrily retort that Satan can't influence him! That is to say, "I am stronger and more firm and righteous than Satan — Satan never could deceive me!"

Satan CAN use you

But listen, dear brethren of God's Church, Satan is MORE POWERFUL, MORE CUNNING, MORE SUBTILE, than any human being on earth! Unless you and I are constantly on guard — close to God in constant heartrending

prayer — constantly close to God and His truth through Bible study — Satan CAN deceive you, blind your eyes to God's truth and USE YOU! Satan has used and led, without their knowing it, even some of our ministers in past years.

Paul continues in his letter to those at Corinth: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if HIS MINISTERS" — mark you, it is speaking of those who unwittingly become SATAN'S MINISTERS! — "also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness" (II Cor. 11:13-15).

In God's Church in our day, self-appointed "scholars" rose up in what they called a doctrinal committee, devoting themselves, NOT to discovering any NEW TRUTH — but trying to disprove the TRUE DOCTRINES Jesus Christ put into His Church through His apostle, and inject false doctrines into the Church of God.

This very thing happened in the days of the apostle Paul and the original apostles. And SATAN DID BLIND AND DECEIVE THOSE WHO, WITH HONEST HEARTS, HAD ACCEPTED GOD'S TRUTH!

It happened again in the next two centuries. After the apostle John wrote the book of Revelation in the 90s, A.D., Satan was using those at Rome to inject the pagan Easter instead of the Lord's PASSOVER!

A disciple of John — Polycarp — engaged in a heated controversy on this question with the Bishop of Rome. Later, Polycrates entered into an even more heated controversy with a later Roman bishop on the question — referred to as the Quartodecimani controversy.

About the same time, Satan was using ministers in the Church to

completely do away with the real work and function of the Holy Spirit, by calling the Holy Spirit a "Ghost" — a third Person in the godhead — calling God a TRINITY, "Father, Son and Holy Ghost."

Brethren, do we think we are so superior to those of the first, second and third centuries that Satan could not have tried to pervert God's TRUTH today?

God preserved His truth

But praise be to God — even though so much of GOD'S TRUTH was distorted, changed and replaced with false doctrines in the very first three centuries, and remained hidden from God's Church until our 20th century, God's original TRUTH was preserved IN HIS WORD!

And, beginning in the fall of A.D. 1927, God began an absolutely UNIQUE WORK on the one the living Christ had chosen to be His apostle. He put me through the wringer that squeezed out all former misconceptions and untrue beliefs, using me to put His TRUTH into His Church that is to rise and meet the glorified Christ in the clouds as He returns to establish the Kingdom of God!

The END TIME has come! God has restored original TRUTH! HOW PRECIOUS IS IT TO YOU? — or do you trample it underfoot as swine would trample into the mud the most precious diamonds, rubies and precious stones, and go for the slop?

Yes, Satan has tried to WATER DOWN true doctrine — to turn God's Church to false truths. Apparently it is unhappily true that some willingly fall by the wayside and shall not continue on to enter into the KINGDOM OF GOD! But I have not retired — I am still vigorously active. Jesus Christ is still on God's throne, as the dynamic living HEAD of God's Church! □

The Sad Story of the Church at Corinth

By David Albert

What happens when a church becomes openly critical of its apostle and founder? The answer can be found by examining a situation that occurred in the church at Corinth. It's a sad story that contains a message for the Church today.

Paul raised up the Corinthian church (Acts 18:1) between A.D. 50 and 52 and continued to labor in the city, laying the foundation of the church.

No church in Paul's domain exceeded Corinth in terms of its spiritual gifts (I Cor. 1:4).

There's a cause and effect relationship here. Paul — not just any minister, but an apostle — worked hard to make sure the church did not come behind in any gift. With God's help and his labor, he got it off to a good start.

But, in the presence of this abundance of spiritual gifts were also problems. Three to 3½ years after the church began, Paul alludes to the difficulties there.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you . . . For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

"Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (I Cor. 1:10-13).

Paul's point was that the Church as one body cannot be splintered into various factions, divisions or sects.

But the Greeks came out of a democratic society, the world's first. Naturally they looked at the issue demo-

cratically and wanted to elect, or select, their own leaders.

Church becomes openly critical

The Greeks weren't in the least hesitant about criticizing their leaders either. This church, which Paul raised up, became openly critical of Paul, so much so that it's almost unbelievable.

And the Church of God at Corinth was more than just critical of Paul. He was, in essence, being judged by them.

I hope you see the irony in that. What business did this church have in judging and criticizing the very man responsible for bringing them into the Church? But that's the condition that had developed.

And Paul's letters to them show his patient efforts to ward off the inevitable consequences of such critical and embittered attitudes.

Looking at it from the Corinthians point of view, Paul could have been criticized for many things. After all, he wasn't perfect, and never claimed to be. Look at I Corinthians 1:14-16 for example.

"I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanus: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other."

Can't you just hear the complaints after that statement? "He doesn't remember? He doesn't remember that he baptized me? Well, what kind of a pastor . . . ? Does that man have any love? I mean, how could he baptize me and lay hands on me and then forget he baptized me?"

Paul's defense

Paul's defense in this regard was a good one for an apostle. "For Christ [verse 17] sent me not to baptize, but

to preach the gospel [to evangelize on a broad scale, the way an apostle is called and commissioned to do]: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."

So Paul just wrote that off. He said, I've got one job in life — I'm supposed to preach the Gospel. Sound like anybody you know?

The Corinthians thought of themselves as very knowledgeable, very wise. But Paul said: "And I, brethren [I Cor. 3:1], could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as babes in Christ. I have had to feed you with milk, and not meat, because you were not able to bear it, even now you're not able" (paraphrased).

He told them that they were carnal uninspired human beings with their eyes focused on people — eyes blind to the spiritual calling of Jesus Christ.

The background in chapter four makes the attitudes that prevailed at Corinth a little clearer. Paul is having to say here, "Please, please think of me as a minister of Christ, as a steward of the mysteries of God."

Why did Paul have to say this at all? Why should there have been any question? Least of all from these people. If Paul wasn't a minister, how'd they get into the Church?

Judgment is God's business

"It's counted with me . . . a very little thing that I should be judged of you or of any man's judgment: I judge not myself. I know nothing by myself [that is, of which I'm guilty], yet that doesn't justify me: he that's going to judge me is the Lord" (I Cor. 4:3-4, paraphrased).

Judging apostles is God's business, brethren! Paul knew that. He wasn't answerable to the Church of God in Corinth, he was answerable to Jesus Christ.

So he told them, "Don't judge anything before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (I Cor. 4:5, paraphrased).

Paul finally brings the issue home in II Corinthians 6:11-13 when he tells the Corinthians that all the contention and division in the church is not his problem; it is their problem.

"O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged. Ye are not straitened [constrained] in us, but you are straitened in your own bowels.

"Now for a recompense in the same [for a little repayment on my investment of love for you], (I speak as unto my children,) be ye also enlarged."

Paul is asking them to love him as he has loved them. To forgive. To be a little more tolerant, a little less judgmental. To be a little more patient and a little less critical. He is speaking to a church that is slipping away from his control and influence, and hence from God's.

Satan's influence

In II Corinthians 2:10 Paul deals with the disfellowshipping of a person in the church there. Paul says, If you forgive the person, I forgive also. And if that's taken care of, fine. Let's not let it be a problem. If you've forgiven him, so do I.

(Verse 11) "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." Here Paul uses the first personal plural, which is usually meant as the first person singular. He is saying, "I am not ignorant of his devices." Paul was mindful of what Satan could do to a church.

While Paul may not have been ignorant of Satan's devices, the church in Corinth was. They thought they were full and rich, like kings.

It is interesting in this connection how often Herbert W. Armstrong has spoken about Satan's influence. He's written about it voluminously — how Satan works in moods and attitudes, and how a big part of our struggle is not just human nature, but dealing with Satan's influence directly.

And we have less excuse for naïveté than the Corinthians, because we've got their story. Let's take heed.

Proof of apostleship

Paul was continually being asked to prove his apostleship. "In all things we are approving [or the Greek implies simple proving] ourselves as the ministers of God. We prove our ministry daily in much patience and affliction and necessity, in distress, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, labors, watching, fasting; pureness, knowledge" (II Cor. 6:4-6, paraphrased).

What do you want? He could say it — he had done it, he had lived it.

He says in II Corinthians 6:8-9 (paraphrased), we prove ourselves the ministers of God by "honor and by dishonor, evil report and good report: [he was called] a deceiver and yet he was true; he was an unknown [in some quarters] and well known [in others — just like Mr. Armstrong today]."

Don't think, brethren, that the proof of a man's life or his ministry or his apostleship rests solely in good reports, honor and fame. It doesn't. There will also be dishonor, evil reports and shame. Don't be influenced by that. Paul would cite those things — such as imprisonment — as proof of his apostleship.

Satan's use of evil reports

Satan uses evil reports today to sway your mind as he did with the Corinthians, causing them to break their faithful, prayerful, constant allegiance and support of God's servant in their day and time. And it works every time. Many of those people fell away.

The same thing happened in Asia, with apparently even more devastating results. Paul said, "All they that be in Asia have forsaken me." It isn't exactly clear what "they" means, but it's scary in its implications. To think that an apostle would have to say that a whole region, such as the eastern seaboard of the United States or Canada or Australia or some other part of the Church, had just dropped out is unimaginable.

"We have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man. I speak not this to

condemn you: for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you.

"Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you" (II Cor. 7:2-4). He's bold, very plainspoken in his relationship with his congregation. "Receive us, accept us," he says.

Are we coming to the time in this Church that Mr. Armstrong will have to write in this same way? I think he has already had to. And that's ridiculous, brethren.

If we can look back 2,000 years into Church history objectively, we can see the absurdity of it, the spiritual folly of a church writing off its apostle. Those who do are committing spiritual suicide.

Read the rest of II Corinthians and notice how Paul pleaded with those people not to leave the Body of Christ or reject the ministers placed over them.

The sad story of the Church of God at Corinth is the story of unrequited love, love that didn't flow both ways.

Paul loved Corinth. He spent of himself, of his emotions, of his bowels of compassion and concern. And isn't it sad that he would have to write, "Though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved" (II Cor. 12:15).

A final warning

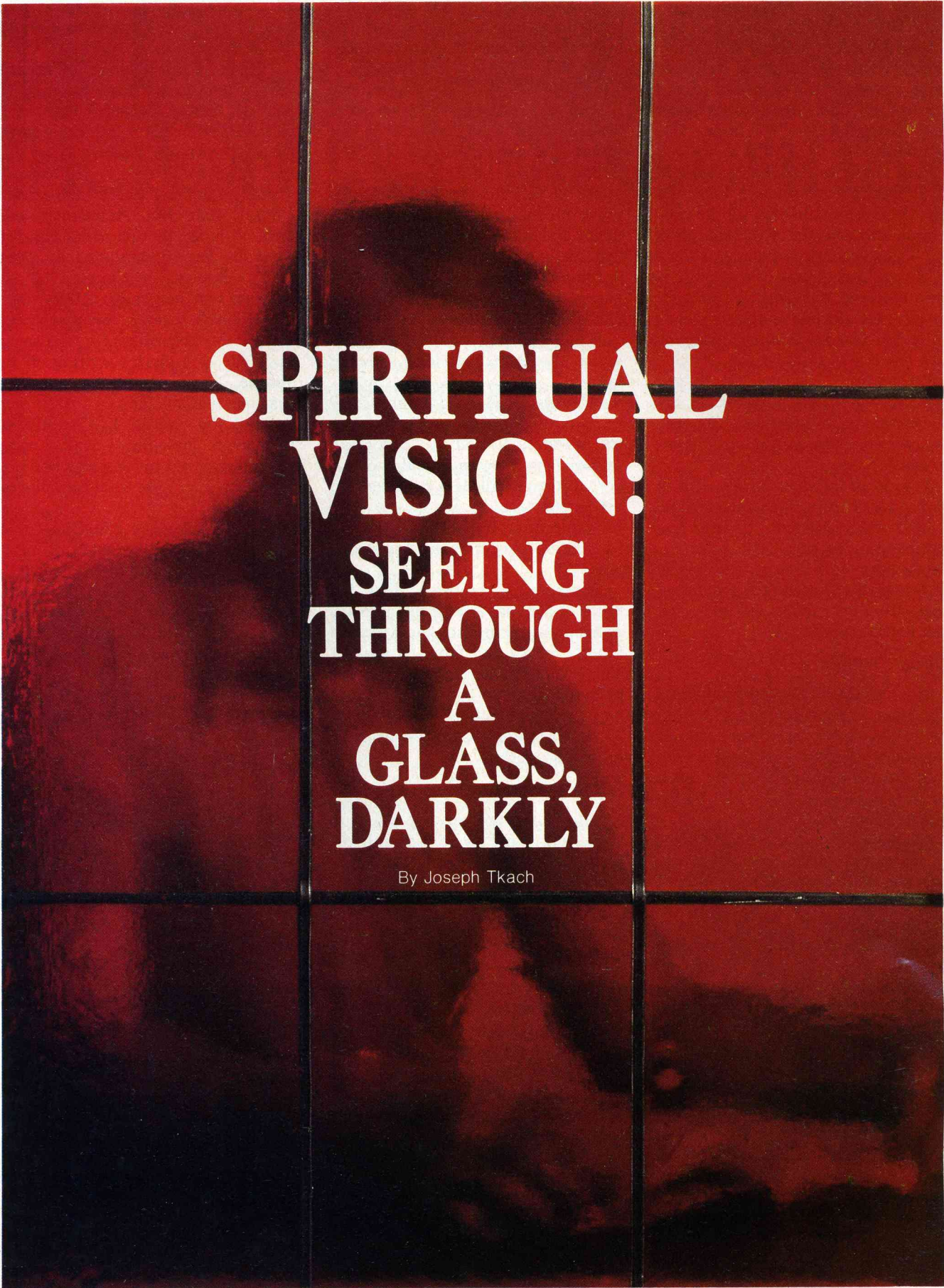
Paul's final warning to the church is found in chapter 13, a formal, legal-like statement.

"This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." The moment of truth had arrived.

"I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; that if anybody had sinned I will not spare: you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which toward you is not weak [Okay, you're going to get it. If that's the way it's got to be I can do that too, but I don't like to have to do so] . . .

"Examine yourselves [Don't spend all your time examining me, Church of God — examine yourselves] . . . prove your own selves. Know you not your own selves, how that either Christ is in you or you're reprobate?"

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SPIRITUAL VISION: SEEING THROUGH A GLASS, DARKLY

By Joseph Tkach

Have you ever tried moving around in the dark — total, pitch-black darkness — in a room that you are fairly well familiar with, and found you stumbled and bumped into everything? Or have you tried to go through your normal motions wearing a blindfold? If so you can probably begin to comprehend how essential vision is.

The Bible says a lot about vision. Physical analogies are used to teach spiritual lessons. Read Proverbs 29:18:

"Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he who keeps the law, happy is he." Here the Hebrew word for *vision* is not the ordinary word for something that is seen. It describes what we call *seeing ahead*, and *knowing what it's all about*, in a spiritual sense.

Christ had such spiritual vision. John 5:30, "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."

"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will," He said in John 6:38, "but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will [now here comes the "vision"] which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (verses 39-40).

Before conversion we were in total spiritual darkness, alienated from God.

Ephesians 2:1-3: "And you hath he quickened [made alive], who were dead in trespasses and sins, Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.

"Among whom also we all had our conversation [our manner of life] in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

A new perspective

In Ephesians 4:17-18, Paul describes the walk or lifestyle of a be-

liever, one who is a new man in Christ, who now has the spiritual vision to see and put things in their proper perspective.

"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened [which ours was], being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart."

Spiritual vision enables us to look afar off to the Kingdom of God, to the fulfillment of God's promises.

It's hard to see in darkness. So Christ said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness" (John 8:12).

Talk with someone who has totally lost his vision, who has to rely on a stick to prevent himself from stumbling, stepping off the curb or suffering some major accident. He has to learn how to guide himself. His other senses have to become more acute.

But if blindness has caused him to more fully appreciate the importance of spiritual vision, of being totally illuminated through his relationship with God, he has a spiritual advantage over many with 20-20 vision.

Spiritual myopia

Now since spiritual blindness afflicts us all to one degree or another, I'd like to draw some analogies from several physical visual disabilities.

The first one is myopia. One can see things near, but can't focus on things far away. How many of us suffer from spiritual myopia? Jesus' friend Martha in Luke 10:38-42 is a classic example.

"Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and [there] a certain woman named Martha received him into her house." Martha had the right attitude. She saw the immediate necessity of serving and was willing. She saw the importance of waiting on the Messiah.

"And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word." Here is the contrast between the two sisters — the one could see the near, but couldn't see afar off, and the other could see both the immediate neces-

sities of the around as well as into the future.

"But Martha was cumbered about [with] much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me."

We can see where Martha put all of the emphasis and the importance. Are any of us thinking that physical service is going to get us into the Kingdom of God? Physical service is a necessity, a labor of love, but it has to be kept in its proper perspective.

"And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful [anxious] and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

Can we focus far in the future, to the time when, with the trumpet blast Jesus Christ descends, that climactic moment when we will receive the promised reward?

Out of focus

Then there is hyperopia. One sees things far away, but can't focus on things near. Physically that's my problem. I can see a little fly buzzing around across the room, but I can't see my Bible. I can't even see my notes, though I write them extra large, without glasses.

Too often we take for granted in our spiritual hyperopia that God will automatically place angels to guard us during the night, provide us a good night's sleep, help us, guide us and guard us in all our daily living. And so life becomes monotonous, the same old routine. We concentrate on the expected end while ignoring more pressing and immediate problems.

A third physical handicap is presbyopia. This is blurred vision that comes with age [think of presbyter, which means elder]. We can apply the analogy to many in God's Church who rely on their seniority, their spiritual age, but whose spiritual vision has become inflexible, impossible to adjust. They live as if they believe now they can coast into the Kingdom.

Seniority isn't going to accomplish
(Continued on page 28)



In Prison, and You Visited Me

By Dennis R. Robertson

Seven years isn't such a long time, but when you're spending that time in San Quentin, each minute seems to have its own sunrise and sunset. George Jackson (not his real name) has spent the last seven years of his life in that California prison, and he'll spend the remainder of it there.

Besides working at his prison job (dishwasher) and playing a bit of handball, he writes. Lying on a hard, metal cot in a room with no windows, he records each day's thoughts and feelings in sort of a self-descriptive novel about his life behind bars.

George is no different than most of the other prisoners, except that he's now a Christian — a member of the Worldwide Church of God. And he's growing in the grace and knowledge of

Jesus Christ because someone in God's Church, in an act of unselfish Christian concern and love, cared enough to visit him — a total stranger.

"Before my conversion, I was completely alone," George wrote to *The Good News*. "I had a mother, a father, sisters, a wife and two kids, and in six years I had received one letter from my mother. It's hard to believe that a total stranger took me in and made my life worth living again."

In Matthew 25, Christ clearly shows the importance God places on our individual acts of mercy for those who are less fortunate.

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate

them from one another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me" (Matt. 25:31-36).

Because of their selflessness in service to Christ, these righteous ones were given a place in the Kingdom of God. But they could not understand Christ's mercy and their great reward.

"Then shall the righteous answer

him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?" (verses 37-39). Christ's answer, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (verse 40).

The epilogue of the story is that those who did not serve and comfort

even the least of the brethren went away into everlasting punishment. They failed to understand what true religion is all about.

God says that pure religion is this, "To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself [oneself] unspotted from the world" (Jas. 1:27).

Our individual responsibility

Each of us has a personal, individual responsibility placed on us by Je-

sus Christ to serve our brothers with genuine concern. Christ said that whosoever desired to be great in His Kingdom could show his greatness through service (Matt. 20:26-27). He also prophesied that in the end time as lawlessness abounds, people's hearts will harden, and the love of many will grow cold.

That attitude can affect even God's elect, and we must guard against it with all our might and the power of God. Many in the Church have already allowed this attitude of nonconcern to penetrate their defenses. It is obvious by their works — or lack of them.

More than a quarter of a million men and women are serving time in state or federal prisons in the United States alone — thousands more worldwide. When was the last time you visited one of them?

And there are 24 million poverty-level Americans from families that earn less than \$6,500 a year, which is more money than millions of Third World families will see in their lifetime. When did you last give any of them a loaf of bread or a pair of shoes? And how long has it been since you've comforted just one lonely stranger?

Most of us fall far short in our personal responsibilities as Christians. Reasons abound for not caring and not showing concern through good works. But there are no excuses. You are being judged, right now, by your actions, and it is those actions that determine your position in the Kingdom of God.

"The time has evidently arrived for God's judgment to begin, and it is beginning at his own House . . . And if it is true that we are living in a time of judgment, then those who suffer according to God's will can only commit their souls to their faithful creator, and go on *doing all the good they can*" (I Pet. 4:17, 19, Phillips translation).

Created for good works

The performance of good works is as central to the concept of Christianity as is belief in Christ and His teachings. From the beginning, God's Church and His people have been committed to doing good. Paul wrote in Ephesians

(Continued on page 27)

Prison Program

Thirty Ambassador College students are practicing what we preach in a controlled prisoner visitation program in California that has successfully reduced the number of returnees there by one third.

The program, called Match 2, is designed to help parolees make the transition to normal life and reduce their chance of returning to prison after their release. By matching convicts who are eligible for parole with responsible people from the outside, the trauma of reentering society is diminished.

"Those prisoners who request visits are reaching out for friendship and a chance to share their lives with a stable influence," said Ambassador graduate Ron Guizado. "How can I deny those things to someone when I have them to give? I can't save the world, but can I just say, prisoner, be you warmed and filled?"

The M2 program was begun in Washington state by Richard Simmons, a Presbyterian minister concerned over the number of ex-convicts returning to prison. In his research he noted that recidivism was the lowest (5 percent) in the Netherlands, the only country that had organized a prison visiting system. The program, in operation since 1849, matched a sponsor with a prisoner of similar interests. Mr. Simmons realized that such a program would also work in the United States.

A prisoner in the program is matched, in his final year in jail, with a responsible person who is compatible with him. Each visitor is asked to visit once a month for the year, and they must agree to spend all day with their match on the day

of his or her release from prison.

Many of the Ambassador College students have been matched with prisoners, most at the California Correctional Institution at Tehachapi, Calif. Those participating have found it to be a rewarding experience.

John Curry said: "Three weeks ago I made my first visit as an M2 sponsor . . . We hit it off right from the beginning and had a very interesting conversation for 1½ hours.

"For myself," John continued, "I was able to get a better insight of what prison life is like, and the problems that inmates face."

According to Mark McCullough: "After two visits with my partner in the M2 program I have learned that it takes time and patience and a little effort to really get to know and understand the person. These prisoners are lonely for someone to just talk to and to spell out how they really feel inside. This helps them to get to know themselves better also."

"Being in prison for a number of years without any visitors," said Randy Martens, "can extinguish any spark of hope residing in a person. It's surprising how even a brief show of concern toward a person can turn their life around."

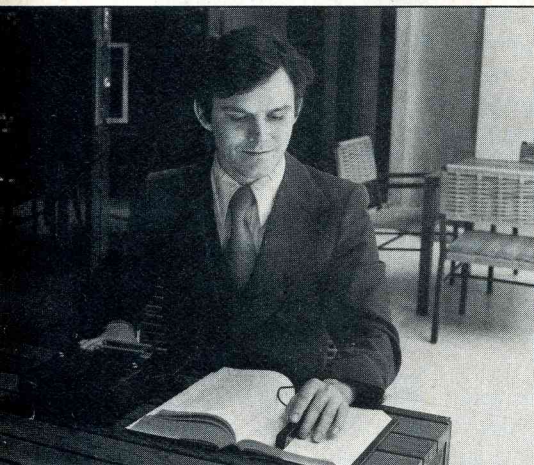
The value of what the students are doing is perhaps summed up in this message sent by one of the prisoners to his sponsor: "I'd like to thank you for getting into a program such as this. I feel you must be a special kind of a person to want to give up your time for an unknown individual in prison, and I will do my best to make it as equally rewarding to you as it will be to myself." — *By John Halford* □

Courage can be measured by sizing up the obstacles a man is prepared to face in order to achieve a worthwhile goal. Courage can also be measured in terms of a man's willingness to pioneer a new path to reach a valued destination.

May 14 of this year, Garth Wardrop Jr., 26, graduated from Ambassador College with high distinction. What's so courageous about that? Simply that Garth is the first blind person to receive a degree from Ambassador. In a sense, he is a pioneer.

In 1971 Garth graduated from the Michigan School for the Blind, his home for 14 years from the age of 4.

From there he went to Wayne State University in downtown De-



troit, Mich. WSU was a commuter college, and, as a result, Garth didn't make one close friend. He said he felt pulled down by the loneliness, so transferred to a computer school in Pittsburgh, Pa.

After graduation in 1975 with a business degree, Garth returned to Michigan, where he tried to obtain special equipment that would enable him to become a computer programmer. Bored by frustrating delays, Garth, assisted by his sister Paddy, began to study the Bible. He had been reading the Bible periodically for about six years, but now began to study it doctrine by doctrine.

At that time Garth did not accept the Bible as having any authority or of actually being the Word of God, but proved some of its principles by studying outside sources. He visited several churches, "comparing the church with the Bible."

Close-Up

Personality profiles of members and co-workers of God's Church around the world.

A few years previously, Garth had suggested to a blind friend, Tim Valender, that he listen to the *World Tomorrow* radio program, which was "all over the dial in the early '70s."

The *World Tomorrow* led Tim into the Church. In the interim Garth and Tim lost contact. However, they eventually got back together and became roommates. Tim was now able to return the favor. He helped Garth study into the question of the Sabbath and ended up taking Garth to a Sabbath service.

In early 1977 Garth, with Tim, began to attend services in Flint, Mich. In May of that year, Mrs. Joe Horchak Sr., a member there, suggested to Garth that he apply to Ambassador. The idea had never occurred to him, but he rose to the challenge, applied and was accepted.

At Ambassador Garth said he felt a sense of belonging not experienced at any of the other institutions. He was involved in the Ambassador speaking clubs and represented his club this year in the annual student speech banquet, a competition among the best speakers on campus.

Garth said he came to Ambassador College with the goal firmly in mind of getting a theology degree, and he refuses to let blindness stand in the way of studying the Bible. "God has in some way been at issue in everything I've been involved in since... I first met people in the Church. When our Father's business is at issue in everything we are doing, any inability to pick up a Bible and read it can be compensated for."

Garth is aided by exceptional recall ("Remembering is easy when something interests you"), which enables him to store much information. "I don't have many scriptures memorized word for word," he says, "but I meditate on God's law each day and night."

Garth pictures his blindness as being analogous to a runner who trains in a lead jacket. "When Christ returns, the lead jacket will be removed. But in the training, the athlete has to run stride for stride with those who don't wear as much lead in their jackets."

Reflecting on his two years at Ambassador, Garth says: The unique aspect of Ambassador is... one is treated as an individual. The system at Ambassador is far more personal."

Garth continues: "And the fact we are here for a cause makes all the difference. The college has indeed faced many difficulties in the last few years, but I have been able to 'ride the rapids' by holding onto the belief that it is necessary for me to graduate, because maybe I can eventually be of some use to the cause for which Ambassador stands."

Until then, Garth says, "I just try to plug along at a resolute pace. 'Resolute' is my favorite word." — *By Malcolm Tofts and James Capo* □



Photos by Roland Rees

ELECTRONIC READING AIDS, left, ease the burden of voluminous reading assignments required of Garth Wardrop. ABOVE: Deputy Chancellor Raymond McNair presents Garth his diploma; a fitting reward after a long struggle.

‘And this Gospel shall be preached...’

Matthew 24:14

Sermon Summaries from Ministers of the Worldwide Church of God

Today, more than ever, it is vital that we read the Bible continuously and drink in deeply of its great truth.

But to really profit from Bible reading, even from diligent Bible study, we must deeply understand the meaning, in terms of personal application, of what we read and study. We must make it literally a part of us. And we can only do this by harnessing the power of meditation.

Many of us don't understand meditation's great benefits. And that is why many of us lack depth and stability in our Christian lives.

Barred from deep thought

Societal demands today restrict deep thought about God, about His purpose, about our own lives.

Television, for instance, is always there, waiting, tempting, with programing that is absolutely damnable. Murder, violence, implicit fornication, filth and rottenness of every possible description. Most people cannot or do not control it. It runs our minds and it ruins our minds. Of course, movies do the same thing.

And the telephone, a seemingly harmless apparatus, rings every time you're about to do something important. It rings so much at our home that I remember praying one time with my family around the dinner table. I had been so distracted all day that as I bowed my head I said, "Hello."

In spite of these modern distractions, we need greater concentration and spiritual depth in order to be like one who was called a man after God's own heart. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful," David said. "But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night" (Ps. 1:1-2).

David meditated

David took time to meditate on the law of the Great God. He thought about it deeply, in great detail. Over and over under the stars at night as a shepherd, upon the royal balcony as a king, out on the battlefield pacing back and forth before the camp fire and at many other times, David thought on God's law.

"O Eternal, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because

of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger [showing how God uses those who of themselves might be weak]. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; What is man" (Ps. 8:1-4).

I have sat quietly at the top of Mt. Whitney, the tallest mountain in the continental United States, rising 14,496 feet from its base. From there I could see way out across the Sierras, clear to Death Valley. Up there with no one else around, you feel kind of small. It's easier to realize in that vast expanse of mountains and valleys and canyons and whistling winds, how small we are.

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him [that the Great God should be mindful of us]? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands, thou hast put all things under his feet" (verses 4-6).

Eventually, the entire universe could be placed in our power. If our attitudes are right, if we're meditating on God's law, asking Him to fashion us and mold us and work with us and make us like He is — sincerely from the heart — we will have that power. God wants it that way.

Why is it so important to meditate on God's laws? David again gives us the answer in Psalm 19:7-9:

"The law of the Eternal is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Eternal are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Eternal is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Eternal are true and righteous altogether."

David said God's judgments were more to be desired than fine gold. And we need to get our minds on those laws, to really become zealous in serving and obeying the Great God. To understand those laws as David did, and as Jesus did, we need to learn the art of real meditation.

Godly vs. ungodly meditation

The world under the influence of Satan has a lot of childish concepts about meditation. Transcendental and oriental-type meditation, simply letting the mind go blank

or conjuring up a certain feeling or mood where Satan or a demon can grab the mind, is not godly meditation at all. That kind of meditation is dangerous.

The right kind of medi-

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

tation is described in Philippians 4:8, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely [things of beauty], whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Do you see what this means? Think on these things, turn them over and over in your mind. Examine their various facets. "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do" (verse 9), Paul continued. That's meditation. "And the God of peace shall be with you."

A definition

Some people like a definition, so here it is: Meditation is the private devotion to deep, continuous, purposeful reflection of the mind on a single theme. In other words, your mind becomes focused on one theme or problem, examining and analyzing its causes and effects. Why was this good? Why was this part of it bad? How can it be better next time?

God spoke about meditation through Moses to ancient Israel in Deuteronomy 6:4-7: "Hear, O Israel: The Eternal our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Eternal thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" — to continually talk about the words of God.

And I think most of you know that the Deuteronomy version of the Ten Commandments just preceded this in chapter 5.

"And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates" (verses 8-9). Why? To help and encourage them to think about and meditate on God's laws.

Meditate on God

We should constantly meditate on God, His laws and His ways. When you watch television, your mind begins to pick up the attitude displayed there — saucy, sassy carnality and rebellion, sexual lust, hate, violence. You begin to meditate on that. TV is a visual meditation, pouring into your mind and into your heart, and much, if not most, of it is bad.

Notice I Corinthians 6:15, "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid." And yet as you watch any number of these TV shows, they make illicit sex seem humorous. It is a horrible thing.

"What, know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, said he, shall be one flesh" (verse 16). God intended sex and marriage to picture the very relationship of love between Christ and the Church. He was willing to give His very life for the Church, and the Church is to give herself in total submission to Him. But, brethren, if you drag anything through a sewer, it's going

Five Ways to Meditate

1. Think through all the applications of God's law and teachings as they apply to your life and to today's society. Remember Deuteronomy 6:6-7: "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

2. When things go wrong, ponder on what laws or principles of God were violated by you and/or others, but start with yourself. You know that whatever we ask of Him we receive of Him because we keep His commandments and do those things or follow those ways that are pleasing in His sight (I John 3:22; 5:14) — not just the Ten Commandments, but all the ways of God, involving the kind of food we eat, the way we dance, the kind of music we listen to, the kind of companionship we seek. In all those things we ought to meditate on and practice the ways of God.

3. As you read of Abraham's obedience to the command to sacrifice his own son because of God's test, or to leave Ur of the Chaldees, or of Israel's going out into a desert place, not knowing what they were going to eat and how God was going to take care of them, or as you read of David's loyalty to Saul, even under difficult circumstances, think through how you can learn from these lessons and apply them to your life. Think what you would do, and then what you ought to do through the mind of Christ. As you meditate, literally plan steps right then to improve your future performance.

4. When a big decision looms or long-range planning is needed in your life, meditate. A lot of you young people need this in planning for your future, your career, your marriage, everything. Think through carefully the spiritual pros and cons in the light of the instruction of the Bible. Don't act without sufficient reason, just on the basis of an untried thought or idea, or on impulse.

5. Weekly, perhaps on the weekly Sabbath best of all, take spiritual inventory of the growth that you've experienced. How you've used your time, the problems you've experienced, why you've had the problems, how to overcome them, how to do better next week.

II Corinthians 13:5: "Examine yourselves [that is, meditate], whether ye be in the faith; prove [test] your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"

to stink. And this vile display of sexual immorality splashed all over television and the movies is stench in the nostrils of God.

God says: "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body" (verse 18). He does that in the sense that he's using his body, his emotions and his nervous reactions in an unusual manner, as a vital instrument in sin.

"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God

Many of us don't understand meditation's great benefits. And that is why many of us lack depth and stability in our Christian lives.

in your body, and in your spirit" (verse 20) — in the spirit in man and the very attitude and thoughts of your mind.

Proverbs 6:32 says, "[He that] committeth adultery . . . lacketh understanding." What it really says in the original Hebrew is, he lacks mind. Because of a lack of the right kind of meditation he doesn't understand that woman was not intended as just a sex object, but the wife and the mother of a man's children, his sweetheart, his companion, the embodiment of his plans, hopes and dreams. And in this physical life the representation of hearth and home, everything that makes life worthwhile, and of the relationship between Christ and the Church.

Get your mind cleaned up by meditation on right and good and clean things. Then when a problem arises, you've already thought through in advance what you're going to do. And it's not some strange situation that will catch you off guard.

A right example

Let me give you a right example of meditation. Back in the early 1950s Herbert Armstrong began to say to us: "Fellows, I've begun to realize how the Creator God is and how God says that everything reproduces after its kind. And the physical was created as a type of the spiritual. We all reproduce after our kind, so would not God reproduce after His kind? And if my sons are human like I'm human, why would not God's sons be God like God is God?"

"But," he said, "I don't know. This concept comes into my mind. It's almost like God put it there. But I'm sort of afraid of it because it sounds blasphemous. We've never believed that man is to become God. Let's keep thinking about it and discussing it from time to time."

So that's how we came to understand that doctrine. Through a process of meditation, Mr. Armstrong simply fastened his mind on the subject, as the definition says, in private devotion to deep, continuous, purposeful reflection on this single theme.

Meditating on God's character, purpose and plan is a fantastic experience, with all the ramifications of what it means to become God. It's something you could spend the rest of your life on, and in one sense you probably should because the whole thing is concerned with your goal and your future in the Kingdom of God.

When to meditate

One can meditate almost anytime. But there are times where it will be more beneficial and productive, such as while studying. As you're reading, for instance, the story of Abraham, picture yourself and what you would do if God said to you, "Get up and get out of your home and your land, away from your family and all you've ever known, and go out into a strange distant place." Live the

story in your mind and your heart. Visualize and think about it, turn it over in your mind, and then apply it to your life today.

Prayer is another time for meditation. Ask God to help you to think things through as you are there on your knees, and talk over with Him all the phases and facets of a particular situation.

Another time to meditate would be walking in the woods or out under the stars at night.

Another is in the night watches, using a biblical phrase, when you wake up and you can't get back to sleep. Notice in Psalm 63:1-6, how King David did this:

"Oh God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is [a world cut off from the knowledge of our Creator]; To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee . . . when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches." Learn to meditate at various times throughout the day.

Psalm 19:1-4: "The heavens declare the glory of God [showing His creative power; His absolute magnificence, and the design that demands a Designer, and the laws that demand a Lawgiver, and the power that demands a Source]; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice [their instruction] is not heard. Their line [rule, direction] is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."

David meditated on all those things. He took time to think calmly and deeply about God, His power and His laws.

I also suggest setting aside a particular time each weekend, preferably on God's Sabbath day because this is part of its purpose, on Friday evening or Sabbath morning, so that it becomes habit. Think through the past week: How far have I come this week? How have I grown? Have I prayed as I should? Studied?

What mistakes have I made? Where did I fall short? How can I do better next week? The Sabbath is a wonderful day to have a weekly reexamination and reorientation.

Make meditation a major, vital part of your life. And pray to God always, as David did, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer" (Ps. 19:14). □

Roderick C. Meredith has been an evangelist in the Worldwide Church of God for 27 years and is now director of the ministry worldwide.



Good News on the French Work

Gospel to French-speaking World

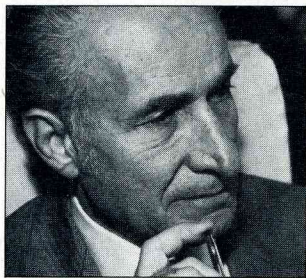
The Gospel is going out to the French-speaking people of the world. *Le Monde a Venir* (*The World Tomorrow*) is broadcast to Europe and the West Indies.

Monthly 30,000 *La Pure Verites* are distributed on newsstands in French Canada, and every major booklet and many reprint articles are available.

With its office in Pasadena, a mailing office in Geneva, Switzerland, and post office boxes in the West Indies and French Canada the French Work is able to serve the French-speaking people of Europe and the Western Hemisphere.

This series tells of the French Work today, its history and its plans for the future. □

Chance Call Leads to Commission



French Director Apartian

In Los Angeles, Calif., in April, 1955, Dibar Apartian needed a job. The young French professor did not have many contacts, so he went to a teacher's employment agency.

"Forget it," they told him, "Don't waste your money. We haven't had a request for a French teacher for 12 years." Mr. Apartian decided to register anyway, and then, since there was nothing else he could do, he went to a movie.

Next morning the agency called him. "Where were you last night? We've been trying to call you about a position you might be interested in."

A small college in Pasadena needed a French teacher and had contacted the agency moments after he left. That's how Mr. Apartian came to work at Ambassador College and the Work of God gained a director for the French Work. Not at once, of course.

Mr. Apartian was unconverted and knew absolutely nothing about the Work.

"I saw that they were sin-

cere people," he remembers. "I didn't accept what they believed, of course, but they assured me that I would be under no pressure as a nonmember of the Church.

One thing that impressed him was the ambitions of the small organization. Dick Armstrong (Herbert W. Armstrong's elder son) told him, "You will see us grow into a Work that will spread around the world." That seemed far-fetched in the early 1950s.

The college enrollment was so small that Mr. Apartian found that he had time on his hands. He thought, if they want to spread around the world perhaps I can help. So in his spare time, he began to translate some of the Church's booklets into French. The first attempted were, *Why Were You Born?*, *What Is Faith?* and *Does God Heal Today?*

He was baptized in 1957 in the lower gardens with the entire student body watching. Mr. Armstrong declared a holiday for the college, for Mr. Apartian was the first nonmember to join the faculty and then to become converted.

Early in 1960 Mr. Armstrong asked Mr. Apartian to make a couple of trial radio programs in French.

"I had absolutely no idea how to go about this," remembers Mr. Apartian. "I had

never broadcast before. I didn't — literally — know how to begin. I wanted to style the program after Mr. Armstrong, but you can't say, 'Well, greetings, friends,' quite like that in French. It doesn't sound right.

"And then, even if I could get started, what would I say? Remember I was not even an ordained minister at the time." He decided to read the French translation of *Why Were You Born?*

Looking back after 19 years of broadcasting, Mr. Apartian readily admits those first broadcasts lacked power and life, and, except for the content, sound pretty much like any other religious program. But perhaps that was a blessing in disguise, for the programs were accepted for broadcast-

ing by Radio Luxembourg.

By 1962, he had gained in confidence and experience and began to pattern his broadcasting style after the style of Mr. Armstrong. The more dynamic format worked — it set *Le Monde a Venir* apart from the other religious programs on the airwaves of Europe. Soon it was pulling in more mail than all of the competitors combined.

"I think at one time we would claim two million listeners," says Mr. Apartian. A record station, Europe No. 1, was added in 1962. The time was early morning, but a growing response showed that the French-speaking people of Europe were being reached. Later, stations in French Canada and the West Indies gave added coverage to the French-speaking world. □

How It Works

The French Work has come a long way from the days it was contained in a filing cabinet in Dibar Apartian's office in Pasadena. Now it can take full advantage of the worldwide mailing and communications facilities available to the Church today.

For example, a man in Yaounde, Cameroon, in western Africa sees an advertisement for the French *Plain Truth*, *La Pure Verite*, and decides to write for a subscription. He notices that the nearest mailing address is Geneva, Switzerland, so he sends his request to our Swiss office.

In Geneva, Bernard Andrist and his staff read the letter from Africa and then forward the magazine request to Pasadena, where the man's name is added to the worldwide mailing list.

The Geneva Office staff handles any personal correspondence and other litera-



Mr. Apartian in the studio

ture requests from the subscriber.

Once a month, the computer prints address labels for the *La Pure Verite* mailing list. The labels are sent from Pasadena to Radlett, England, where the French magazine is printed on the Work's press facilities.

The address label is attached to the magazine, and in time our African subscriber receives his magazine, by way of Switzerland, California and finally London.

You may think all this sounds complicated, but it is the best way to save time and money, by using the full communication resources of a truly worldwide Church of God. □



A sample of Church publications available in the French language

La Pure Verite

La Pure Verite, the French edition of *The Plain Truth*, made its modest beginnings in the early 1960s with a circulation of about 6,000. Today the circulation is more than 50,000, and the magazine goes to 133 different countries around the world.

An additional 30,000 copies a month are distributed on newsstands in French-speaking Canada.

La Pure Verite follows the format of the English *Plain Truth* as far as possible. Most articles are translated in France or Belgium by professional translators and then sent back to the United States. Mr.

Apartian personally edits every article to make sure that the feelings and thoughts of the English *Plain Truth* are properly conveyed in the French language.

Articles with a strong religious content that explain the unique religious message of the Worldwide Church of God are personally translated by Mr. Apartian. After the editing of the articles the magazine is put together by the Work's publishing department in Pasadena. The magazine is printed in England at the Ambassador College Press in Radlett. From there *La Pure Verite* is mailed to almost every country on earth. □

The French Force

Along with Dibar Apartian, a team of French-speaking ministers serve the congregations of the Church.

In Paris, Sam Kneller pastors a church of about 200 people. Mr. Kneller was born in England and spent his childhood in South Africa, Spain, French Canada and Belgium. He is a graduate of Ambassador College, in England.

Another Englishman, James Muir, pastors the churches in southern France at Lyon and Marseilles. Also a graduate of the Bricket Wood campus he spent several years in the Geneva Office.

Bernard Audoin pastors the churches in Toulouse and

Bordeaux, France. Mr. Audoin gave up his career in the French National Railway System in order to serve the Church more fully.

In Brussels, Jean Carion pastors a congregation of about 100 people along with another smaller congregation at Nancy. Mr. Carion is a native Belgian and left his business career to devote his full-time service to the Church.

In French Canada, Colin Wilkins is the area coordinator. An Englishman and a graduate of the Bricket Wood campus, Mr. Wilkins was the manager of the Geneva Office for 11 years.

Also serving the French

Canadian Work are Henry Sturcke, pastor of the Sherbrooke, Que., churches, and Bob Scott, pastor of the Trois-Rivieres and Quebec City, Que., churches. Other ministers there are Donet Picard, an elder originally from France, and Bernard Hongerlot, who serves in Montreal.

About 15 years ago Louis Jubert, a Seventh-Day Adventist minister on the island of Martinique in the West Indies, along with 25 other people, began a church that has now grown to about 240 people. Mr. Jubert died several years ago and was succeeded by Gilbert Carbonnel, a native of Guadeloupe, who was a deacon in the Paris church.

There are two congregations

on the island of Guadeloupe, with about 35 people and another 50 people meeting at Pointe-a-Pitre. They are pastored by Erick Dubois, originally from Guadeloupe. There is no ordained minister on the island of Haiti since the government insists that the minister be a Haitian national. However, a small church meets under the direction of an Ambassador College graduate, Ray Clore.

Bernard Andrist pastors the churches in Geneva and Neuchatel, Switzerland. He is a native Swiss and lived in the Congo for many years where he worked with the Bata Shoe Corp. Mr. Andrist is manager of the Geneva Office, European administrative base for the French Work. □

Future Frontiers for French Work



French-speaking brethren in the Caribbean area

Many areas in the French-speaking world are yet to be reached. French is the first or second language of more than 100 million people.

Bernard Andrist, manager of the Geneva office, travels to the Cameroons, a French-speaking country, every six months to hold services for 50 members. Mr. Apartian hopes to establish *Le Monde a Venir* broadcast there and to arrange for services to be conducted regularly.

The populace in many other countries in Africa also speak French. Included are Chad, Mauritania, Upper Volta, Algeria and Morocco. The Malagasy Republic with more than 7½ million inhabitants has never been reached.

The French-speaking island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean has several members of the Church. Owen Willis, pastor in Nairobi, Kenya, holds an occasional service for them.

Many do not realize that Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos were once part of the French Empire and that French is their second language. However, at the moment communism has a firm hold in these lands, and they are off limits for the foreseeable future.

Also, scattered through the South Pacific are several small countries where French is the *Lingua Franca* — Tahiti, Noumea and the New Hebrides. — By John Halford and Joe Cavallo □

The Parables of Jesus: **WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?**

By Brian Knowles

After the great Galilean ministry, Jesus began to travel outside the province. His journeyings to preach the Gospel took Him to the north to Caesarea Philippi (Matt. 16:13), and then back to Galilee again. Later He went south to Judea and Jerusalem (John 7 and 8). This period is generally called the later Judean ministry by commentators. At some point during this Judean period, Jesus gave the parable of the good Samaritan.

If you have studied a little of the history of Israel, you will recall that the northern 10 tribes of the house of Israel were taken captive by the Assyrians in the years 721 to 718 B.C. The bulk of the house of Judah (with parts of Benjamin and Levi) did not go into captivity until the Babylonians conquered them in the year 585 B.C.

After the northern house of Israel had been carried away, the Assyrians replaced them with gentile peoples from five cities of the area of Babylon, "And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof" (II Kings 17:24).

These gentile peoples still populated Samaria in Jesus' day. They were called Samaritans. They adopted many of the religious customs of the Jews and even claimed to be descended from Joseph — when it was expedient to do so (see Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 11:8:6).

A spirit of antagonism developed between Jews and Samaritans. This spirit is reflected in John's account of Jesus' discussion with the Samaritan woman whom He met at Jacob's well. She said to Jesus: "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings

with the Samaritans" (John 4:9). Obviously there was little or no social contact between the two groups.

With this understanding, we may now look at the parable of the good Samaritan.

The subject in question here is, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" (Luke 10:25). The question had been asked by a lawyer — a man expert in Mosaic law. But the lawyer had no practical interest in the question. To him it was a theoretical test question — he was, in a sense, baiting Jesus. He was testing His theology.

Law divided into two parts

Jesus knew the man was familiar with the Scriptures, so He responded by asking the lawyer a common rabbinic question: "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" (verse 26).

The lawyer then paraphrased from the Torah or Pentateuch — the first five books of the Bible, commonly called the Law. He said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." This was somewhat loosely quoted from Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18.

This simple statement summed up the entire Law, which was divided into two parts, 1) love toward God and 2) love of neighbor.

Jesus confirmed that the lawyer had indeed answered correctly.

But the man wanted to vindicate his own stand, which obviously did not square with the latter aspect of the commandment. He tried to imply that the answer was not as simple as Jesus had indicated. He then presented a technicality. "But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?" (verse 29).

This was the crux of the whole situation. To the religious Jew of that

day, this was a crucial technicality. What if one had to deal with a gentile, a Samaritan, a publican or a sinner? There were many classes of people with whom devout Jews would have no dealings.

But Jesus trapped the lawyer at his own game. He then launched into the now-famous parable of the good Samaritan.

The good Samaritan

Christ described the story of a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho. Possibly he had sold some goods there and was now returning home with the money. The journey to Jericho was a lonely, dangerous 21 miles of desert road. Bandits frequented the route hoping to rob those traveling alone.

The man was attacked by thieves, who even took his clothing. Left badly beaten by the side of the road, the man was half dead and urgently in need of help (verse 30).

By coincidence a Jewish priest came by where the man lay. He would have been familiar with the law quoted earlier, but perhaps he justified himself with the same technical question, "Who is my neighbor?" This is what might be called the legalistic approach to avoiding the demands of the higher law of love.

Rather than stopping to help the wounded man, the priest merely looked and then quickly passed by on the other side. He didn't want to get involved.

Shortly after, a Levite came by, stopped, looked at the suffering robbery victim and also passed by on the other side. Neither of these Jewish religious leaders wanted to take the time and effort to assist the injured man.

But then a gentile Samaritan came along. When he saw the injured traveler he was immediately moved with compassion for the man. His reaction was spontaneous.

He rendered assistance by disinfecting the man's wounds with wine, keeping them moist with olive oil and binding them up with bandages. The Samaritan then put the man on his own beast and took him to an inn for much-needed rest and recuperation.

The particular type of inn being referred to here did not charge for lodging, only for food and sometimes entertainment. The Samaritan gave the host enough money (two pence, about two day's labor, compare Matt. 20:2) to pay for the victim's food until he himself returned.

He left strict instructions that the injured man was to be properly cared for in the meantime. Should the amount exceed what the Samaritan had given the innkeeper, he promised to make up the difference upon his return.

This was a shining example of compassion on a fellow human being. The Samaritan certainly went above and beyond in caring for the man. He did *more* than would normally be expected.

With this indicting example burning in the mind of the lawyer, Jesus then asked the penetrating question, "Which now of these three, thinkest

thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?" (verse 36).

What could the lawyer say? The priest and the Levite had rendered no assistance whatsoever. Only the Samaritan had shown any concern, and he had gone overboard to help the man. But even at that the lawyer still didn't want to say the word *Samaritan*! He merely replied, "He that shewed mercy on him" (verse 37).

The lawyer was now completely cornered. He had no comeback, no legal technicality upon which to fall back. And while he was in that position, Jesus administered the coup de grace, "*Go, and do thou likewise*" (verse 37).

What this parable should mean to you

This parable is not merely a quaint and interesting story of a first century put-down. It conveys one of the most important lessons of Christianity. It is axiomatic to real Christianity that the true Christian must be compassionate and impartial in rendering assistance when it is needed.

Paul said, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10).

And, "See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men" (I Thess. 5:15).

God is no respecter of persons. He is not partial to one race or the other when it comes to showing compassion, hearing prayers and rendering help. God inspired Paul to write, "There is neither Jew [typical Israelite] nor Greek [typical gentile], there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).

With God there is no racial prejudice, no status or social caste system, no male chauvinism. All people of all races, sexes and social levels may be Christians. And it is the duty of all Christians to help all people who need help, whenever they have the opportunity to do so.

The meaning of the parable of the good Samaritan may be summed up by simply quoting a single proverb, "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due [your neighbor], when it is in the power of thine hand to do it" (Prov. 3:27).

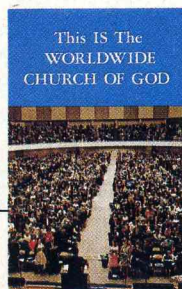
In short, a true Christian gets involved! □



WHERE IS GOD'S TRUE CHURCH TODAY?

Jesus said, "I will build my church!" But does Jesus Christ have many different church denominations doing His Work? Is Christ divided? How, when, and where did today's religious babylon of multiple denominations get started? And how does one recognize the true Church? Our free booklet *This Is The Worldwide Church of God*

answers these questions. We think you'll find it most enlightening. To request your copy, write to *The Good News* at the address nearest you. (See inside front cover for addresses worldwide.) Your copy will be sent as soon as we receive your request.



PROVE ALL THINGS

Be Ready Always to Give an Answer

"... be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (I Peter 3:15).

Suppose a pollster from the George Gallup organization came into your neighborhood and asked: "If you had to pick the ideal family, who on this block would you choose? Which neighbors are always there to help when the need arises? Who has the happiest, most well-mannered children?"

Would your family be selected as the ideal example of friendliness and helpfulness, or are you and your family almost an unknown in your community?

Sadly, some who are members of God's Church have tended to *withdraw* from the world around them. They have been reluctant to meet others in the community or even to show helpfulness to their neighbors next door.

Perhaps part of the reason is a fear of being corrupted by the world and its sinful influence. A Christian is one whose new citizenship is in heaven — he has been called out of the world.

But have we stressed coming out of the world, overcoming sin, abstaining from improper social customs to the degree that we have overlooked our Christian duty to our neighbor?

Christ said: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill *cannot be hid*. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and *it giveth light* unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:14-16).

If we try to keep separate from the world to the extent that we hide our light, we are defeating the very reason we are Christians — to be a witness to the world.

Preaching the Gospel and being a light necessitates an association with

the unconverted. Jesus said, "*I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world*, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil" (John 17:15). Further, "*Goye into all the world*, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). The nonconverted world must see genuine concern expressed in our words and actions.

Christ went about doing good to all kinds of people during His earthly ministry. Much of His ministry required a close interaction with people considered worldly and sinful.

"And it came to pass, that as Jesus sat at meat in his house, *many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples*: for there were many, and they followed him" (Mark 2:15).

When He was criticized for it by the Pharisees, Jesus explained: "They that are whole have *no need* of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance!" (Mark 2:17).

Jesus knew that the influence of God's Holy Spirit in Him combined with His own example would have a wholesome impact on those around Him. He came as the light of the world to show the right and proper works of God *as an example* to all people — and to lead sinners to repentance (John 1:9).

The pure, upright examples of Christ's followers today can have *just as strong* and dynamic an influence.

As Jesus charged His disciples centuries ago, so are we charged today, "I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit" (John 15:16).

If we become spiritual hermits and withdraw our love and concern from the world, thus neglecting to exemplify God's way in a proper manner,

we are failing in our responsibility.

The apostle Paul wrote, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good to all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10).

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Phil. 2:15).

We have a responsibility to allow the "light of the glorious gospel of Christ" (II Cor. 4:4) to shine out to others.

If we are truly close to God — drinking in of His Holy Spirit — we can rise above this world's influence. With God working mightily in us, there is nothing to fear. "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (I John 4:4). The sin of this wicked society should not drag the Christian down. Rather, he should be able to help lift up the sinner from his agony, misery and heartache, and demonstrate to him a better way.

It means having neat homes and well-behaved children. It means being the first to smile and to extend a friendly greeting. It means sharing vegetables from your garden, baby-sitting when a mother is sick, running an errand for the elderly.

In other words it means getting right down to a warm and friendly one-on-one contact — expressing a true regard for neighbor in terms of genuine kindness and friendship.

By using God's Spirit we can radiate the life of Christ in us. Setting this kind of example would guarantee the pollster from George Gallup would hear:

"The most neighborly family? Why, it's that Church of God family down the street. Everybody in this neighborhood would tell you that."

— By Richard Rice □

Jonah was one of the most successful spokesmen God ever used, but he failed to appreciate his commission because he resented what God was doing through him.

Among the people God has called to thunder His messages to a rebellious mankind, the prophet Jonah may be unique throughout history.

Not necessarily because he, a lone Israelite, was sent to warn a large gentile city of God's coming punishment. Not because of his 72-hour adventure inside the belly of the great fish. And not because his book is the only one among the minor prophets that records a prophet's activities rather than his prophecies.

All these facts make Jonah singular enough, to be sure. But the most outstanding thing about Jonah is that, among all biblical prophets, he was *successful* in his mission. At Jonah's preaching the ancient metropolis of Nineveh repented of its sins and caused God to spare it, the Assyrian capital, from destruction.

Just as incredible, though, was Jonah's great anger and bitterness over this very success. Jonah never wanted to fulfill God's commission in the first place, and all the while God was working through him, he resented it. In Jonah's experience are several lessons for God's people today.

Jonah's mission

Jonah prophesied in northern Israel during the reign of Jeroboam II (792-753 B.C.). He foretold Israel's territorial expansion to roughly the area held during the time of David and Solomon (II Kings 14:25).

Israel was enjoying relative prosperity at the time, but it didn't mean God was pleased with the nation. The Israelites, God's elect group, and often blessed at other nations' expense, had sinned worse than the people God drove out of the promised land before them and had failed to be the good example God wanted them to be to the world. But Israel was not to escape retribution for its covenant

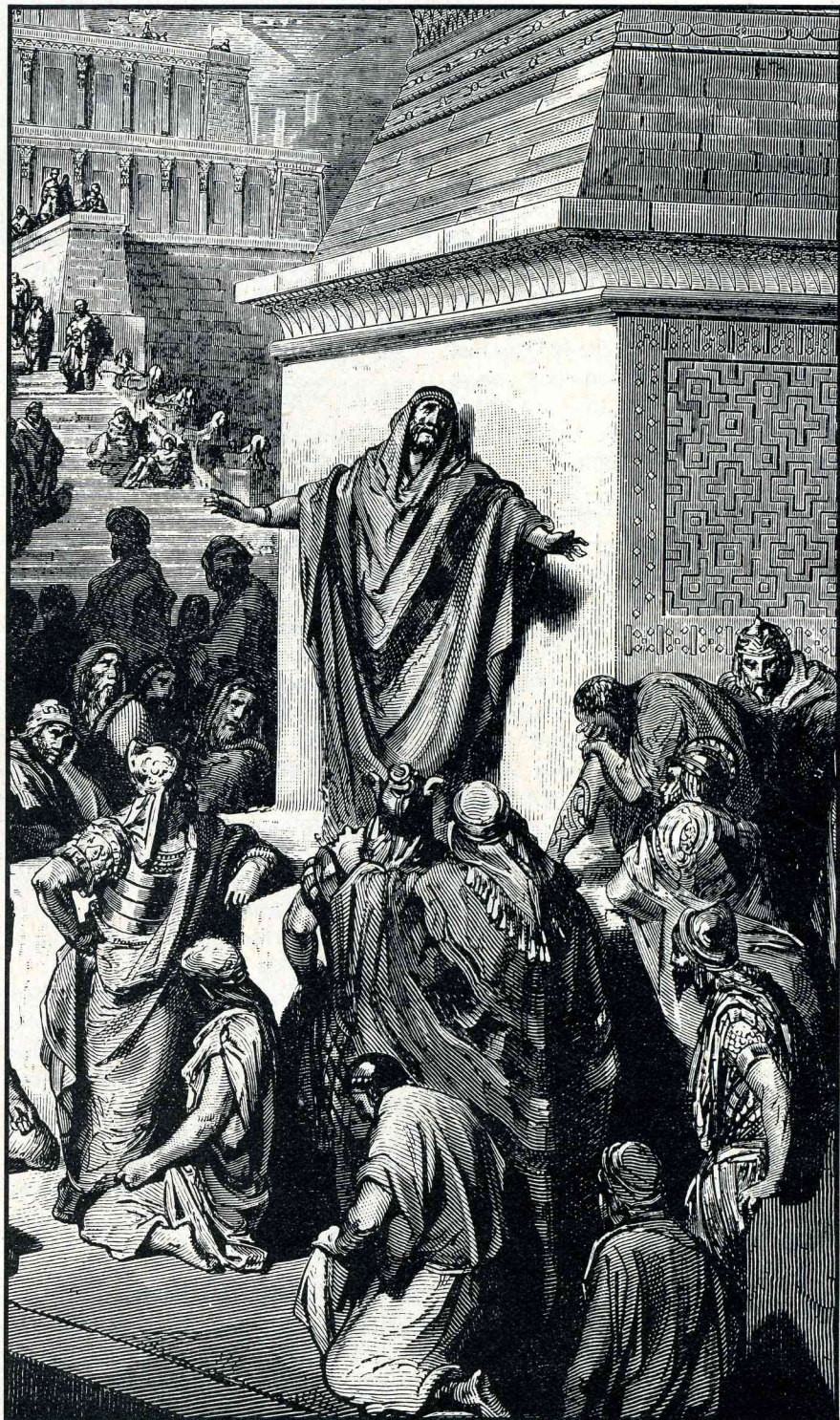


Illustration by G. Dore

JONAH

the Reluctant Prophet

breaking. God intended to use a Mesopotamian power to humble His nation (Amos 2:6-16, 5:27).

It was at this time that God commanded Jonah to pronounce His judgment on Nineveh. The son of Amittai may have suspected that God was going to use Assyria to chasten Israel. If Jonah's warning from God caused the Assyrians to repent and be spared, he would be instrumental in his own nation's downfall. So Jonah rebelled against God's every instruction, not seeing that the Creator had an overall plan in mind. Jonah didn't believe God knew what He was doing.

Jonah didn't trust God

God commanded Jonah to cry against Nineveh because of its evils, but Jonah went in the opposite direction on a ship bound for Tarshish. God continued to work with the reluctant prophet by sending a great wind to batter the vessel at sea. As the ship appeared to be headed for tragedy, the men aboard began to cry to their various gods for protection.

They roused Jonah, who of all things was asleep, and urged him to do likewise. When they cast lots to learn whose fault the tempest was, Jonah was singled out. Desperately, they asked him what to do to calm the raging waves.

And it appears Jonah would rather have died than do what God asked. He replied that they should cast him into the churning waters. How hopeless Jonah's rebellion had left him.

The mariners tried to row the ship to land, but in vain. They finally did as Jonah said they should and threw him into the deep. Even they realized that this act had been planned by Israel's God, and they asked the Eternal not to lay Jonah's fate to their charge (Jonah 1:14).

And God was working out a grand purpose. He had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was to remain in the creature's belly for three days and three nights. Later, in His own wicked generation, Jesus Christ would give only this sign of Jonah to prove He was the Son of God. After His murder, Christ was to be buried three days and three nights before being resurrected (Matt. 12:39-40).

This outstanding series of God-ordained events must have sobered Jonah somewhat, for he thanked God for rescuing him from what would have been a watery grave (Jonah 2:1-9). God then caused the fish to expel Jonah out onto dry land.

God again told Jonah to preach at Nineveh. By this time the prophet should have sensed that God's will was going to be done one way or another. Perhaps dejected, Jonah went on his way to the city.

God's anger turned

One of the most spectacular events recorded in the Bible followed. At Jonah's announcement of Nineveh's imminent fall, the entire community — from the king to the least beast in the herds — put on sackcloth and began fasting. The king ordered that every Ninevite abandon his violent ways, "Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?" (Jonah 3:9).

And though Jonah's message had been final, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown," God saw how the Assyrians reacted and didn't overthrow them. God is not willing that any human should ever perish, and Christ recognized the Assyrians' repentance as real (Matt. 12:41).

Success! Jonah's effort had helped avert the destruction of one of the world's largest cities. Did he jump for joy and praise God for such a miracle?

Unfortunately, no. Jonah still failed to see that God's will, whatever it is, must be done. Instead he sat outside Nineveh, moping over what had happened.

Jonah missed the point

It was hot that day. So God, to teach Jonah a lesson, prepared a gourd to spring up and shade him, and the prophet was glad. But the next morning God prepared a worm to smite the gourd and make it wither. Then when the burning sun and the vehement east wind tormented Jonah, he wished he could die.

When God asked him if his anger was justified, he sneered, "I do well to be angry, even unto death" (Jonah 4:9). The book of Jonah ends with God explaining to the sullen prophet that everything had turned out well.

"Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right and their left hand; and also much cattle?" (verses 10-11).

Jonah had fulfilled God's plan. The Creator didn't have to destroy the populous Assyrian capital. But Jonah may never have gotten the point.

A lesson in trust

Jonah didn't understand that God really loves all mankind, not just Israel. God's ultimate goal is to bring all humans into His family. Israel failed to pioneer in that respect.

True, God did use Assyria to carry Israel's northern 10 tribes into captivity in 721 B.C. (to find out where those so-called "lost 10 tribes" went, see Herbert W. Armstrong's series of articles in *The Plain Truth* titled *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*). But Jonah failed to see God's overall plan, refused to believe God could and would work everything out for the best and balked at delivering the message God gave him.

We must realize our insignificance compared to God. We were created to fulfill His will, and we will only be happy by doing so cheerfully, not in an attitude of doubt and resentment (I Cor. 10:31, Rev. 4:11). God's people today have been given a message to deliver to a doomed world. And that message — mankind's ultimate hope — has far greater import than did Jonah's announcement 2,700 years ago.

Whether we're taking care of the large or small responsibilities in our daily lives or going forward in faith worldwide to announce the coming Kingdom of God, we should understand that our calling is a great privilege. We must follow wherever and however God leads.

Then we won't be like Jonah, the reluctant prophet, who performed a unique mission for God but never appreciated his calling. He didn't put his heart into the work before him. It was Jonah, not God, who didn't know what he was doing. —By Norman Shoaf □

MINI STUDY

Living by FAITH

FAITH

The Good News, in conjunction with the Correspondence Course Department, presents brief monthly excursions into the study of the Bible, delving into topics relevant to the development and increased understanding of future members of the God Family. Bible study is one means by which Christians are renewed daily (II Cor. 4:16), so let's refresh ourselves with more of the precious truths of God's Word!

Instructions: The format of these ministudies is similar to that of the Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course. Look up and *read in your Bible* the scripture references given in answer to the questions. Comments following the questions elaborate on the scriptures just read. That's all there is to it! (These studies are based on the King James Version of the Bible, unless otherwise stated.)

What is faith? Exactly what kind of faith do we need to please God — to live the obedient, overcoming Christian life outlined in the Bible and be born as glorified sons of God in the ruling Family of God?

First, we must understand that faith is not the power of positive thinking — trying to pull yourself up by your own bootstraps. In other words, trying to improve and overcome by your own strength alone.

Many people also make the mistake of confusing faith with emotions. They try to work up faith, which to them means an emotional feeling. These feelings are not the evidence of having faith. They are in the class of what can be seen, heard, tasted, smelled or felt — in other words, they're of the *flesh*.

Faith is a *spiritual* matter — not physical! Let's understand God's definition of the kind of faith required for salvation, and how we may receive and retain it.

1. Are Spirit-begotten Christians to walk — *live* their lives — by faith? II Cor. 5:7; Rom. 1:17.

2. Do they seek and look forward to obtaining promises and rewards that are *not seen*? Col. 3:1-2. Did Paul elsewhere verify the fact that

Christians seek after the *real*, but unseen eternal rewards and promises of God? II Cor. 4:18.

3. Do the above scriptures confirm God's definition of faith found in Hebrews 11:1?

Faith is the "substance" — more accurately the assurance or confidence — "of things hoped for." Before you receive what you hope for, you already have it in *substance*, and that substance — that assurance or confidence that you shall possess it — is *faith*! Faith is your evidence that you *shall have* what you do not yet see.

4. Is it possible to please God without faith? Heb. 11:6.

As this verse explains, faith toward God is expressed in *absolute recognition* that God exists and that He blesses us both in this life and in the life to come — as long as we sincerely serve and obey Him. This faith is *acquired*. You cannot cause yourself to have that kind of faith through autosuggestion! (More about acquiring this faith later.)

5. Must obedience to God and other good works clearly accompany one's faith in order to make it *alive* and acceptable to God? Read James 2, verses 14-26.

6. How does one demonstrate his faith? Verse 18. What does one's faith become if it is *not* accompanied by works? Verses 17, 20, 26.

Some have let a *dead* faith creep into their lives. Faith to them has become a mere belief in Christ's existence and His sacrifice for the sins of mankind. They have lost sight of the fact that there is something God requires them to *do*!

We dare not allow ourselves to drift into a passive condition. We are not excused from keeping God's commandments (Matt. 19:17-19) — from striving to live a righteous life (Matt. 5:48). We're not excused from overcoming, growing in spiritual character and enduring in spite of opposition, persecution, trial and test *unto the end*. God expects us to actually *do* these things in order to inherit eternal life.

7. Did Noah express *living* faith when he obeyed God by building the ark He had commanded? Heb. 11:7. Was there any physical evidence that a flood would come? Same verse.

MINI STUDY

(Notice the words, "things not seen as yet.")

Noah had a trust and confidence in the invisible God to perform what He had *promised*. And he proved his faith *by his works*! Faith and obedience went hand in hand to produce *living faith*.

8. Did God prove righteous Abraham to be faithful or full of faith? Neh. 9:7-8. What did Abraham *do* to prove his faith? Gen. 26:5; Jas. 2:21-23.

God tested Abraham's willingness to obey in and through faith. Abraham had the kind of faithful obedience God requires of all Christians. But what a sad lack of that kind of *living faith* there is today! All too many do not believe God will keep His promises. Consequently they don't really want to obey Him.

One of the most thrilling examples of *living faith* is that of Daniel's three young friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. Recall that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had erected a great golden image and ordered everyone to worship his idol at certain designated times. Those who refused were to be thrown alive into a fiery furnace (Dan. 3:3-6).

9. What did Nebuchadnezzar do when informed by Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego that they would not worship his golden idol? Dan. 3:19-23.

What would you have done had you been in their place? Would you have said, "Well, I have to bow down to this image — I have to do it or be killed"? And perhaps you may have excused yourself thus, "I don't think God would be fair if He punished me for bowing down before this idol, when He knows I am forced to do it."

Yes, it's easy to use human reasoning to excuse disobedience to God. But God isn't looking for chances to punish us, but rather for opportunities to *save us through faith* in His power!

These three young men knew that "we ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). By faith they knew that God makes it possible for us to obey Him.

Notice that God allowed them to go beyond the point of human help. No one could help now, but God. He had to see that they would not only be willing to say they would go all the way, but He allowed them to go all the way before He saved them from the trial. He expected them to go that one step further — to back up their words by their *actions*.

10. To his amazement, what did the king find when he looked into the furnace? Verses 24-25. What did Nebuchadnezzar say to the three men as they and one "like the Son of God" walked

around in the midst of the fire? Verses 26-28. (Notice the words, "delivered his servants that *trusted* in Him" in verse 28).

This is an astounding example of *living faith*! A faith that *trusted God* to make it possible to obey His law!

God tells us through Paul that He will never test us beyond what we are able to bear (1 Cor. 10:13). Yet it would seem that if anybody ever came to the breaking point, these men did! But they never even broached their breaking point in this trial because they had *absolute faith* in God. And the God they *faithfully obeyed* did intervene to save them!

Let's understand now exactly how it is possible for us to have the living faith necessary to please God.

11. Is the faith through which we receive salvation a *gift* from God? Eph. 2:8. Is this faith an attribute of the Holy Spirit that all true Christians must possess? Gal. 5:22. Is this faith in reality the faith of Jesus Christ? Phil. 3:9; Rom. 3:22.

12. Did Paul plainly state that Christ lived in him? Gal. 2:20. How did Christ live in him? Phil. 2:5; Rom. 8:9-10. Then did Paul live by the very *faith of Christ*? Notice Galatians 2:20 once again.

Paul didn't live by his own faith. Jesus Christ dwelt in Paul through the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit of God from Christ implanted in Paul's mind the same kind of faith that can be in your mind! That faith — the *very faith of Jesus Christ* — will enable you to live a righteous life of obedience to God as did the apostle Paul and all of the righteous men and women of God.

If we were able, of ourselves, to supply the faith to obey God, we would *earn* our own salvation. It would be the result of self-righteousnesses that are as "filthy rags" to God (Isa. 64:6).

But the above scriptures speak only of the faith of Christ. Yes, Christ's faith — not your faith. Jesus had living, active, dynamic faith — *God's faith*! And Christ in us imparts His own strong faith to you and me that trusts God to make our spiritual obedience possible!

13. Since our receiving of God's promises hinges on the faith of Jesus Christ at work in our lives, how do we assure our continued receipt of the Holy Spirit and the faith of Jesus Christ? Acts 5:32; Rom. 12:1-2. Is this how Paul retained the faith of Christ? Gal. 2:20.

It is by yielding to God, and *asking Him daily* in earnest, persevering *prayer* to give us the faith of Christ to trust and obey Him, that we shall indeed have it. — Prepared by Richard H. Sedliacik

When the Light Goes Out

The world is running out of oil. As we begin a new decade the situation looks bleak. Increasingly familiar are newspaper headlines that read "Gasoline shortage," "Iran cuts back oil exports" or "Gas rationing imminent."

The immediate effect of the shortage is apparent to car owners hunting for enough fuel to fill their tanks, but the long-term effects are more serious. Eventually whole communities may be forced to cut back on energy until darkness will envelop our towns and cities.

A spiritual analogy

For those of us in the Church of God, there is a spiritual analogy in this worldwide oil shortage. Oil is symbolic of God's Holy Spirit, and just as a nation running out of oil gradually descends into darkness, so any individual who lets his supply of God's "oil" diminish will just as surely see his "light" dim and finally go out.

In Matthew 25 the Church is pictured as 10 virgins who go out to meet the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ. Five of these young women were foolish because they neglected to provide oil for their lamps.

When we understand Proverbs 6:23, "For the commandment is a lamp," we see that these virgins (perhaps representing half the Church) had an understanding of God's law. However, through neglect of Bible study and prayer — essential elements in watching and waiting for Christ's return — their lamps were in danger of going out. They lacked spiritual oil — God's Holy Spirit.

This shortage was not caused by a cutback at the supplier. God tells us that He is more than willing to give us His oil, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Luke 11:13).

All we need to do is ask, there is no need to wait in line (verses 9, 10). The only rationing imposed is by ourselves through lack of contact with the Producer.

Don't fall short

Jesus said: "You *are* the light of the world . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:14, 16). It is our responsibility to ensure that we have sufficient oil for our light to function. Failure to be a light means falling short of being a Christian.

Later in Matthew 25 is a list of good works that Christ will look for in His "sheep." Visiting those in prison, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, taking in strangers, providing for the thirsty (verses 31-46) are examples of Christians recognizing a need, fulfilling it and thereby letting their lights shine out in a spiritually darkened society.

Good works must become a way of life in order to keep our lamps shining brightly.

A singleness of purpose, a determination to overcome the inevitable pulls of the flesh that cry out for self-gratification, is required. As Jesus Himself explained it:

"No one lights a lamp and hides it! Instead he puts it on a lampstand to give light to all who enter the room. Your eyes [the direction you have determined to go] light up your inward being. A pure eye lets sunshine into your soul. A lustful eye shuts out the light and plunges you into dark-

ness" (Luke 11:33, 34, Living Bible).

And then a warning: "So watch out that the sunshine isn't blotted out. If you are filled with light within [your purpose in life is clear and unclouded], with no dark corners, then your face will be radiant too, as though a floodlight is beamed upon you" (Luke 11:35, 36, Living Bible).

An unlimited supply

Paul wrote of a spiritual oil shortage in Ephesians 5:8: "For ye were sometimes darkness [yet today we are connected with a source that will never run dry], but now are ye light in the Lord." And then Paul's admonition, "Walk as children of light."

Our personal supply of oil is available today and is as near as our own prayer closet. One day the whole world will have access to that same unlimited supply. You can read about it in Revelation 21:23 and 22:17.

Let us heed the words of our Savior, "Let your loins be girded about, and *your lights burning*. And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately" (Luke 12:35, 36).

The five wise virgins did keep their lamps trimmed. They went out prepared to meet the Bridegroom, making sure their lights didn't go out. How about you? — By Philip Stevens □

Stanley R. Rader

(Continued from inside front cover)
have to ask, *WHY* HAVE SO MANY IN GOD'S CHURCH BEEN WILLING TO BELIEVE THE WORST against Stan Rader? I want to answer that, and once and for all set the record straight.

I have to go back 50 years or more to explain, because there is a resemblance to this unfortunate situation in my early experience with the Sardis people in Oregon.

Jesus Christ called His people "sheep" who seriously need the leadership and protection of competent and honest shepherds.

Jesus said, "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light" (Luke 16:8). Those of this world know better how to deal with others of this world than God's sheep.

In the autumn of 1926, when my life-changing challenge came, I was one of the "wise of this world." I had been in business. From age 18 to age 34 I had no interest in religion. I think I was upright and honest and sincere — yet very much a part of this world. I had not neglected education and did possess the equivalent of postgraduate degrees.

The brethren in Oregon began immediately to look to me for leadership, especially in giving the Gospel message to the world. The ministers worked against me every way they could. They were jealous. Wherever God used me in speaking, FRUIT WAS BORNE — THERE WERE CONVERSIONS, newly baptized members brought in.

Yet, of the Sardis ministers of that time there was not one single conversion brought about that I could find, and I specifically asked at least two

of their oldest and most loyal members if they knew of any conversions brought about by church ministers.

The brethren knew that I was newly converted out of the world. I KNEW THIS WORLD! I KNEW HOW TO APPROACH AND REACH THIS WORLD. The Sardis ministers did not. They appeared as just so much "ignoramus foolishness" to the world.

The Church NEEDED the leadership of one who had the know-how to reach the world.

When I was completely converted, spring of 1927, I did not try to change my personality. I, with my wife, ABHORRED any put-on mannerisms that could have made me APPEAR "religious."

I remember once when one or both of my sons brought to our house a neighbor boy. He later said to them, "Why, your dad does not seem like a preacher." I seemed just like any businessman.

I *did* change my attitude and basic interests and concerns with values — I did eradicate all slang words such as *darn*, but I did not PUT ON any new sanctimonious appearance. I was just NATURAL — myself — although Jesus Christ was CHANGING that self.

Just as, in order to get God's Work moving, in GOING TO THE WORLD, the Work then needed one who could effectively reach the world, so in the early 1960s, I came to realize God's Work needed the services of one who had expertise in finance, banking, borrowing and legal matters.

We had started using Mr. Rader in a limited extent, on a professional-fee basis, in certain legal matters and contacts with radio stations. He was distinctly the most brilliant of the men we had used in these areas. In due time, later, we discussed with Mr. Rader the matter of giving up his CPA

and legal clients and devoting full time to us. The Work needed him.

In 1972, when Garner Ted Armstrong was banished from the Church and college and living in Colorado, all top-ranking ministers had turned against Ted — but Stanley Rader stood loyally with me as TED'S ONLY FRIEND, in working to bring Ted back into the Work.

But once back, Ted started a campaign of persecution and character assassination against Mr. Rader such as I have never witnessed and have never found chronicled in biblical history.

WHY, I ask again, *WHY* do some ministers and even some brethren lay members, think EVIL of Stanley Rader?

Could it be because he is "worldly" wise and therefore able to give the Work a help none of us can give? Is it because he has not tried to PUT ON a religious or sanctimonious personality and appearance and appears more worldly than we? Even though I know for a fact some well-recognized members or ministers are, in fact — especially Garner Ted — more worldly in ATTITUDE and WAYS than Mr. Rader.

I do not want Mr. Rader to PUT ON a sanctimonious or religious-type bearing.

To sum up briefly, when I look at the RECORD — at the FRUITS — I find them mostly GOOD, the GOOD far outweighing the bad. This Work could not have come to the state of success in God's eyes that it has otherwise.

Mr. Rader is not perfect — nor am I — nor are YOU! But maybe now, all of you who have GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT will have a little more KINDLINESS in your attitude toward the one my son would paint as Satan incarnate. "Judge NOT that ye be not judged!" □

Which Shall We Obey?

(Continued from page 2)
nor administration of Roman government to the sects of the Pharisees and Sadducees. So the Pharisees actually were the government of MAN.

When they sought to take Jesus and put Him to death, *He escaped among the crowd* — because His time to be crucified had not yet

come. Jesus did not meekly turn the other cheek and say: "Here I am. Take me and destroy me." You read in Matthew 12:14, "Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, HOW THEY MIGHT DESTROY HIM!"

This is precisely what happened on Jan. 2 this year, 1979, in secret in the chambers of Judge Jerry Pacht in Los Angeles, Calif. It was a *secret council* on HOW HUMAN GOVERN-

MENT COULD DESTROY the very Church of the living GOD!

Jesus withdrew Himself

What did Jesus do? Did He "turn the other cheek"? Did He say, "I must under all circumstances OBEY the human government of MAN"? No! The next verse says, "But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence."

Another time these representatives

of the government of MAN sought to take Jesus, in a crowd, to DESTROY Him, but Jesus slipped out among the crowd and escaped from them. WHY? Did not Jesus finally submit to crucifixion? Surely! But He had planned this final crucifixion with God the Father, even before the world was. He escaped from them because His time was not yet come (John 7:6).

He only submitted to the government of MAN *when* the time had come that was planned between God and the future Christ even before the world was. Until then, HE RESISTED THE CIVIL GOVERNMENT OF MAN even as HIS CHURCH has done in our day!

How did Jesus speak to the representatives of the GOVERNMENT OF MAN?

He said to them, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" And again: "Woe unto you, ye blind guides... Ye fools and BLIND... Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees... Ye blind guides... Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like whited sepulchres... Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Matt. 23:14-33).

Some would teach you that Jesus was wrong — that He should have "turned the other cheek" and submitted.

Some asked Jesus regarding obeying MAN'S law or GOD'S law. Jesus said, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto GOD the things that are GOD'S."

God's property

The headquarters buildings and property of the Worldwide Church of God are GOD'S — not Caesar's! The government of the state of California was trying to TAKE OVER and STEAL the campus and buildings that ARE GOD'S! They are decided in GOD'S NAME! God's NAME is inlaid in prominent letters in the Auditorium, which is the HOUSE OF GOD!

Mark you this, and mark it WELL! At no time did God's Church or its Pasadena brethren VIOLATE ANY LAW! Had the government of California, under the action of the attorney general, come to arrest Mr. Stan-

ley Rader or me, on a charge of "pilfering" and "siphoning off millions of dollars to our own use," we would have submitted voluntarily, and then, in court, PROVED that the charge was FALSE! But they did not come with any warrant! We had violated no law! We DID NOT in any manner ATTACK the men representing the state of California.

WHAT, ACTUALLY, DID HAPPEN?

Officers from the attorney general's office and deputies came without any definite CHARGES, swooping down without even the legally required advance NOTICE, INVADING GOD'S PROPERTY AND FACILITIES!

They came on trumped-up baseless charges, on a fishing expedition, to seize books and records, HOPING that they might find some evidence, records or CAUSE to bring definite charges against us! At least that is what they were SUPPOSED to be unexpectedly invading GOD'S premises for!

NO evidence of wrongdoing

But they found no evidence against either Mr. Rader or myself, because there is no such evidence — no such things were ever done by us!

When we remember Jesus' statement, Render unto Caesar the things that ARE Caesar's and unto GOD the things that ARE God's — we were 100 percent in OBEDIENCE! We had to protect properties BELONGING TO GOD in order to RENDER UNTO GOD THE GREAT COMMISSION TO WHICH HE HAS CALLED US. We raised no gun, sword or weapon of any kind against the State.

WE BROKE NO LAW! — but THE STATE DID BREAK THE LAW, and the very Constitution, the basic law of our country, violating its FIRST AMENDMENT! We are NOT "law-breakers" — but the state of California through its attorney general's office is!

The government of man

God said to Adam and Eve, in effect: "You have made the decision for all your posterity for the 6,000 years of the time I have allotted to MAN! You have REJECTED my GOVERNMENT; you have rejected me as the Source of basic knowledge. You have rejected me as your GOD and chosen SATAN, WHO NOW SHALL BE THE 'GOD OF THIS WORLD' (II Cor. 4:4).

"Therefore GO, and form your own governments, your own religions, create your own fund of KNOWLEDGE and devise your own way of disseminating that FALSE knowledge to your oncoming generations!"

So we have the GOVERNMENT OF MAN, swayed and formed under SATAN THE DEVIL! But remember this: In MAN'S GOVERNMENTS, formed under SATAN'S sway, even Satan knows that in HIS world, if it is to stand at all, there must be laws against breaking SOME of God's Ten Commandments, such as stealing and murder. Satan APPEARS as an "angel of light." He must APPEAR to be righteous before his deceived world!

So, MAN'S LAWS do protect the majority against evils against itself. Therefore God's teaching to us is this:

We, as GOD'S OWN PEOPLE, have *come out* of this world. We are not part of it. We do not vote or participate in its government in any way. We must live *IN* it, but we must NOT be *OF* it. Yet we are to stand loyally back of Christ's chosen apostles in carrying Jesus' Gospel MESSAGE of the KINGDOM of GOD to the world — not to convert the world, but to be a WITNESS FOR ALL NATIONS (Matt. 24:14).

Be subject to Christ

Meanwhile, though not *OF* this world, yet living *IN* it, we are to be SUBJECT, in our individual lives, to its government. Yet we are to be, first of all, SUBJECT TO CHRIST (Eph. 5:24). Where it is a matter of disobeying GOD if we obey man's government, we OBEY GOD, and if need be, suffer whatever PENALTY man's government imposes.

Should Christians ALWAYS obey MAN rather than God? Millions were put to death, honored in the Bible as the MARTYRS of JESUS long ago. And, according to Revelation 6:9-11, there will soon be ANOTHER mass martyrdom of God's people.

But Revelation 12:14 and 3:10 show that *this* Church shall ESCAPE the soon-coming martyrdom of saints and be taken to a place of SAFETY during the coming GREAT TRIBULATION.

Let's be sure we obey Christ FIRST! □

Church at Corinth

(Continued from page 5)

I trust that you know that we're not reprobate . . .

"Finally, brethren, farewell, be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind [be unified, be together, get over this strife, the division, the party spirit and all that led up to it]. Live in peace, and the God of love shall be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss" (II Cor. 13:1-12, paraphrased). The book concludes as it began, with an exhortation toward unity.

A sequel to the story

And so the biblical account of the church at Corinth ends. But that's not all. The church went on. We have, in a letter of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians, a sequel to the story.

Postapostolic apocryphal literature, which is mostly Greek mythology and the like, does contain, however, a letter of Clement that sounds much like the writing of a true minister of God. He's writing perhaps as late as the 80s, maybe a bit earlier.

But in a little introduction in *The Apostolic Fathers*, there's a reference to what happened at Corinth years after the biblical account ends.

A feud had broken out in the church. Presbyters appointed by the apostles or their immediate successors had been unlawfully deposed. Clement's attempts (this is after the death of all the apostles except John) to deal with the situation are recorded.

He mentions that certain men were unjustly thrust out of their ministries. And he reminds them that they will not find any record where righteous men were ever thrown out by holy men. Evidently they kicked out the hand-picked successors of the apostles in Corinth.

Clement's letter

And he said, "Your division has perverted many. Take up the epistle of the blessed Paul, the apostle [now he refers back to Paul's letter], what he first wrote unto you in the beginning of the Gospel, of the truth he charged you and the spirit concerning himself and Cephas and Apollos because even then you had made parties.

"It is shameful, dearly beloved, yes, utterly shameful and unworthy of your conduct in Christ that you should be reported that the very steadfast and ancient of the Corinthians, for the sake of one or two persons, makes sedition against its presbyters [in other words, an uprising against its duly appointed ministers]. Let us therefore root this out quickly."

And later he says: "Who is therefore noble among you? Who is compassionate? Who is filled with love? Let him say, If by any reason of me there be faction and strife and division I retire, I depart whither you will, and I do that which is ordered by the people. Only let the flock of Christ be at peace with its duly appointed presbyters."

That's the critical issue here at this late date. These church leaders were "duly appointed." But once the apostles had died, there was quite a bit of infighting and political maneuvering for power.

"You therefore that laid the foundation of this sedition [maybe the same people that we read about in I Corinthians], submit yourselves unto the presbyters and receive chastisement unto repentance, bending the knees of your heart, learn to submit yourselves, laying aside the arrogant and proud stubbornness of your tongue; for it would be better for you to be found little in the flock of Christ and to have your name on God's roll than to be had in exceeding honor, and yet be cast from the hope of Him."

John's account

Let's compare that with III John 9-10 because what Clement was writing about was a condition that came upon the New Testament Church in the decades just after the apostles.

John said: "I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes [a Greek name], who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. [They no longer would accept the authority of the apostles.]

"Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren [probably John's represen-

tatives] . . . [but rather] casteth them out of the church."

John is likely writing about the same circumstances as Clement. The church was so turned around that anybody who came from God's apostle was automatically rejected. Now think about that. That's where this type of criticism and examination of those who have duly constituted spiritual authority leads.

Guard against a negative, turned-off and embittered attitude. If you're already in one, God help you, literally, to get out of it.

Remember whom God used to build our Church today, and who has, what Clement would have called, duly constituted authority — authority that is lawful and right and straight from God. We're encouraged in Hebrews to follow such people.

"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, consider the end of their conversation" (Heb. 13:7).

Finally, brethren, there are sensitive issues in the Church today. Matters come up from time to time that trouble us. Maybe they shouldn't, but they do.

Our chief defense

Prayer, along with Bible study, is our chief defense. When matters come up that Satan could use to disturb a lot of people, we should go straight to our knees and talk to God about it.

But what happens instead? People talk to others when they should be talking to God. If we prayed about those things more and talked about them less, the results would be much more positive.

Mr. Armstrong has said that some day we're going to wake up and realize that this was the most important Work in 1,900 years.

If we're still around at the end, we'll see that we were not stumbling around under human influence. This is the Work of God. We should consider ourselves privileged to have a part in it.

The story of the Church of God at Corinth reveals the results of a disintegrated relationship between a church and its apostle. We dare not let that happen to us. □

PERSONAL

(Continued from page 1)

will be Satan's churches. The Sardis era in the main had become spiritually dead — had rejected too much of GOD'S TRUTH — was accomplishing virtually NOTHING in spreading the true Gospel to the world (indeed had no clear conception of what that Gospel is).

The Laodicean church will be characterized by spiritual lukewarmness — half of its membership (Matt. 25:1-13) will be shut out of the Kingdom of God.

But, the BAD NEWS, as it appears today, my dear brethren, is that we, undoubtedly of the Philadelphia era — my son's ridicule notwithstanding — are in serious danger of BECOMING also the Laodicean era. I am personally much concerned about that. If

YOU are NOT concerned, then indeed *we are in mortal DANGER.*

Attempts to destroy Church

Satan is pulling out ALL STOPS now to DESTROY THIS CHURCH OF GOD! No matter how angrily and vehemently they deny it, SATAN is USING these former leaders, and they are yielding completely to Satan's will! I no longer hesitate to call a spade a spade!

But what Jesus Christ raised up is the CHURCH OF GOD. Today it encompasses the earth, so we call it the WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD! Garner Ted bragged to me that HE built this Church. It was BUILT when he was 3 years old!

Much much later, my son was allowed to have microphones before him that went out on hundreds of stations.

But what CHRIST BUILT through

his father placed those microphones before him. He STARTED nothing! He pioneered NOTHING!

But a letter from one woman member illustrates what happened. She first heard of us through one of my son's TV programs and wrote for literature. She read booklets that I wrote, on what is salvation?, what is the Kingdom of God?, what do you mean, "BORN AGAIN?" etc. And THESE BOOKLETS led to her conversion. There have been many like that.

Let me close with one thought. It is now a little late in life for me to turn to Satan's way, as so many others in high places have done.

God never yet has let one through whom He STARTED a great project turn wrong — and He has never yet let such an appointed leader of His die *until his job was FINISHED!* □

In Prison

(Continued from page 9)

that this is the very reason for our existence:

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10, Revised Standard Version).

The Church is doing many great works in nations around the earth. The Work — as it is called — has grown from a small West Coast operation in the United States to a worldwide concern expending millions of dollars a year to do God's Work. Today, as prophesied, we're doing an even greater work than Christ Himself did.

Each month the Work mails millions of magazines and other pieces of literature, and multimillions of watts of radio and television power are used in fulfilling our commission.

But what about you as an individual Christian and your own responsibility in doing good works? Is just being a part of an organization enough? God says it isn't!

It is all too easy for individuals involved in a mass effort to hide behind the skirt of corporate religion, neglecting their own spiritual duties.

But God says at the judgment, He will render to every man according to *his* deeds, not according to the deeds of the Church he belongs to (Rom. 2:6).

We cannot depend on the Church's record for our own salvation. Too many of us, resting on the laurels of the organization, feel justified by the dollars we send in and the prayers we send up. Instead of being active Christians, we are acting Christians, and the latter will be spewed out of God's mouth at the judgment.

Jesus hates hypocrisy. To him religion is not an exercise in intellectual vanity or self-righteous satisfaction. It is actively living and doing the commandments of God. He continually attacked the scribes and Pharisees for pretending to be something they were not.

These religious leaders of Jesus' time were the antithesis of true religion. They were continually wrapped up in numerous talmudic dos and don'ts while neglecting the more serious considerations of outgoing love and concern for their brothers.

Faith through works

Brethren, it is up to Christ to satisfy the needs of a world that is dying from spiritual malnutrition. As Jesus said in John 6, "I am the bread of

life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John 6:35).

But as disciples of Christ and heirs of His Kingdom it is up to each of us, individually, to bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the royal law of Christ. We are hypocrites if we say we have faith in the commandments and do not show that faith through works.

"What does it profit, my brethren, though a man say he has faith, and have not works? can faith save him?"

"If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be you warmed and filled; notwithstanding you give them not those things which are needful to the body; what does it profit?"

"Even so faith, if it has not works, is dead, being alone" (Jas. 2:15-17, paraphrased).

Thousands, like George Jackson, are alone in this world. Millions more are hungry and naked. And they all are made in the image of God.

If you've been lax in showing real concern for others, especially your own brethren, start immediately to practice the love and concern that God's Church has preached for years. In so doing you will be establishing your place in the Kingdom of God. □

GLASS, DARKLY

(Continued from page 7)

anything for us. A babe in Christ may obtain a higher position in the Kingdom of God than those suffering spiritually from the blurred vision that comes with old age.

Distorted imagery

A fourth visual problem is called astigmatism. This may cause blurred, hazy vision at any age. Images become distorted, crooked and overlap. A spiritual astigmatic loses his sense of balance and values. As a result he's disorganized, his priorities often wrong. It's almost impossible to reason with a person with this particular problem.

I think Romans 1:21-24 describes a person in this category: "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." They gambled on their own spiritual viewpoint, and as a result, the lights went out.

"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves."

The conduct of their personal lives because of their distorted vision jeopardizes their relationship with God.

Romans 3:12-18: "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways . . . the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes."

Sins, unrepented of, can lead to another spiritual visual handicap — cataracts. Our vision is progressively impaired by dimming blind spots that eventually result in total blindness. The apostle Paul wrote of this

condition as "having their conscience seared" (I Tim. 4:2).

Achieving spiritual 20-20 vision

I Corinthians 13:12-13: "For now we see through a [less than transparent] glass, darkly; but then [we'll see] face to face. Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abides faith, hope, charity [love], these three; but the greatest of these is charity [love]."

Psalms 119:105 tells how we can develop acute spiritual vision, "Thy word [the revealing Word of God, the light of life] is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

Psalms 146:5, 8: "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help,

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whose hope is in the Lord his God . . . The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind."

II Peter 1:3-5: "According as his divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust . . . giving all diligence."

When it comes to developing spiritual maturity and really improving our relationship with God, it has to be with all diligence.

In the beatitudes, Matthew 5:6 says, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." It's going to improve our spiritual vision.

We'll be able to see things both near and far away. There won't be any blurry, hazy vision.

Back to II Peter 1:5-7, "And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance [self-control]; and to temperance patience and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity [love]."

Protect your spiritual vision

"For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is *blind* [is in total darkness, has lost the spiritual vision], *and cannot see afar off*, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and your election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall" (verses 8-10). That is a concrete promise.

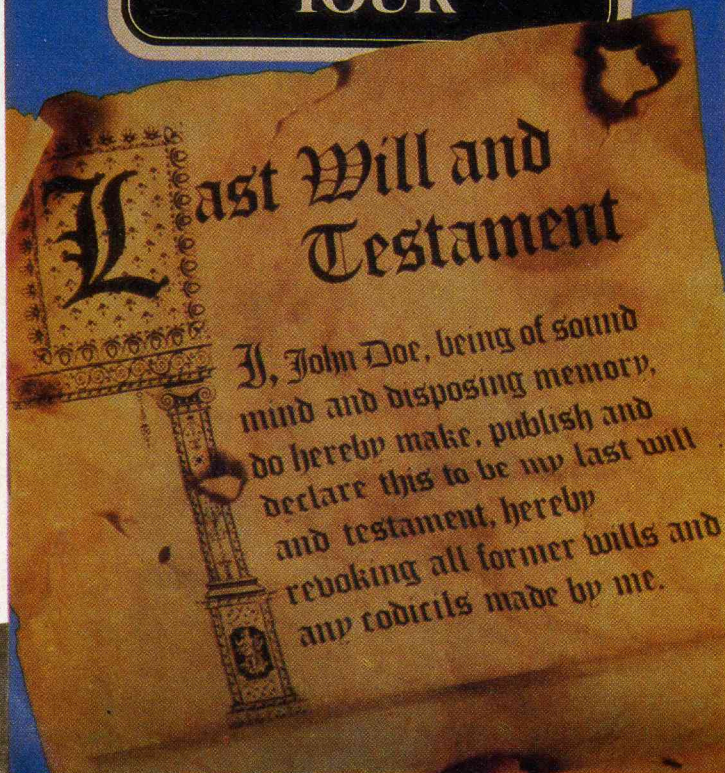
Luke 9:62: "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and *looking back*, is fit for the kingdom of God" — a wrong use of vision.

Hebrews 10:26-36: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful *looking for* [vision again] of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."

"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

"For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were *illuminated* [by the light from God], ye endured a great flight of afflictions . . . For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." □

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THE GOSPEL
BY
YOUR**



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