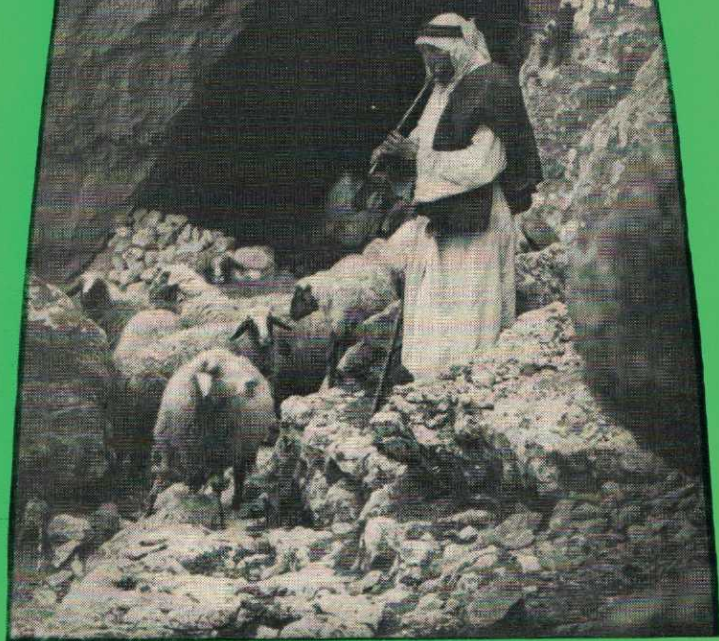


food for the flock



MAY 1967 - VOLUME 13 - NUMBER 5

INCORPORATING "Light and Liberty"



Family Bible Hour

PHILIPPINE REPUBLIC

Detroit and St. Catharines assemblies sponsor the Family Bible Hour radio program over several Far East Broadcasting Company stations in the Philippines. In addition, the Queenston Street and Pelham Road Assemblies of St. Catharines pay the cost of broadcasting over a small station at Marbel, Cotabato in the Philippines. The Family Bible Hour treasurer received the following from the station manager.

"Each Tuesday morning our small staff meets for prayer in the office at the station. We pray for problems and for future plans but we always remember the programs as they are aired from week to week, that the Holy Spirit will give wings and drive home each message.

"I feel that the Gospel presentation of the Family Bible Hour is the most direct of all our programs. Volume of mail may lie with the request programs and with those of the more

popular, but we are sure that the Lord is using your programs in His way.

"We want you to know that we so appreciate your donations as you are able to make. Our original subsidy (made in the planning stage) never did materialize, but the Lord has allowed us to pay our bills and to maintain and improve equipment this past year. (We were one year old on the 19th of December.)

"God bless you good people and the program the Lord has laid before you."

One of the ministries of the Family Bible Hour is the production of a Sunday School paper entitled "Youth Talk." It is gospel-centred and yet has teaching for young Christians. It is attractive and colorful. For sample copies write — Family Bible Hour, P.O. Box 51, Toronto 15, Canada.

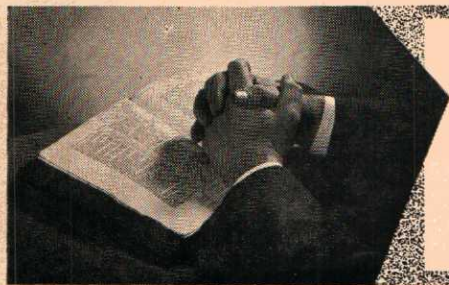
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Devotional

HEART EXAMINATION

John M. Moser

EVERY physical examination includes a thorough check of the heart. If the heart is not examined it is not a complete examination.

As surely as everyone needs a physical examination, so surely do we need a spiritual examination. The spiritual examination must start with the heart.

Within the past eighteen months I have had three of these spiritual heart examinations in emergency situations.

The first came on a Friday evening. The telephone rang and in a few brief sentences my wife was told that a brother in the Lord had entered into the presence of the Lord very suddenly.

Immediately a portion of II Kings 10:15, came to my mind "— is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart?" The last time I had visited with Phil was just a few days before in our living room. After this "examination" I could honestly say, "Phil could go into the actual presence of the Lord and say 'Our hearts are right one with the other.'"

Twenty four hours later the phone rang and a dear friend told us that she and her children had "— a little problem, but all is wonderful for Amos." Amos was "at home with the Lord." Again it was necessary for a heart examination. Again II Kings 10:15, came to my mind and a careful examination brought the

same conclusions I had twenty-four hours earlier.

A year passed, and on a Saturday morning I answered the phone to hear the voice of a close missionary friend in Kentucky tell us that just before midnight, Cliff (a friend we had come to know and love through the missionary) was killed in a mine accident.

Again we had an emergency heart examination. Again we came to the same conclusion as in the other two examinations.

I passed these three examinations, but as I underwent each, I was keenly aware that there were circumstances where I would not have passed. If any of the calls would have mentioned certain other Christians I would have had to hang my head in shame. Maybe it was because the other person and I had a misunderstanding and we parted without straightening out the matter.

Yet if either the other Christian or I had been called to Heaven before we had resolved the problem it would have been forever too late to get our hearts right one with the other. For complete happiness and full fellowship here and now, it is important for believers to get their hearts right one with the other as it is for sinners to be saved NOW! As long as believers' hearts are not right one with the other there is broken or strained fellowship, saint with the Saviour.

Today with the many means of

communication there is no reason to delay contacting our fellow-believer and getting our hearts right. The greatest means of communicating really is **Prayer** and God will work to bring about right hearts in a hurry. Our hearts need examinations in three aspects. First of all, in our feelings one toward the other. With the three brethren mentioned there was no ill feeling one toward the other. None of us had spoken an unkind word to or about each other, or about anyone else. Looking at it from a different angle, the same examination would have given the same results had we met in our home, a store, or anywhere else.

The second area of examination is in regard to our will or desires. Our mutual desire was to have fellowship with the Lord, with each other, and to see His Word spread, and His work prosper.

Finally, we have to examine our heart regarding the intellect. God does not expect us to know everything, but He certainly does expect us to behave and act according to what He has shown us from the Bible, and from the teaching from His Word by His servants as they open the Scriptures to us.

Someone may raise the question, Do you mean that there was absolutely nothing, **nothing** at all in your lives that was objectionable? My answer here is simply this, We tried as best we could, and as the Lord gave us the grace, to be at peace with each other. We enjoyed fellowship together in the things of the Lord, our families and friends, and with each other. Each one of us was mindful

of the Scriptures, and that we are brethren in the Lord and **not judges!**

Then I reflected again on the last meetings with the three brethren. Phil was here in our home and as he left, with a smile and a hearty handshake, both of us looked forward to more fellowship in the near future. "I want to see you at home next time" were the words of Amos as the elevator door closed and he went to his home, and I went back to my room in the hospital. Cliff, too, gave us his characteristic broad, cheery smile and hearty handshake as we parted for home after a visit in Kentucky.

We need more frequent heart examinations, and we should not wait for death or an emergency. Doing this, we will find more happiness and closer fellowship with the Lord and fellow believers. Then, too, we will wait with greater anticipation and appreciation for the time when we shall be in the presence of the Saviour.

As we review the findings of these three examinations we are aware that it is possible for us to live one with the other and our hearts be right. We also find that this is not true, **sad to say**, with every child of God.

Musing on the last words I had with my friends makes me anticipate our Lord's soon coming and His welcome smile as I join them in HIS presence for eternity.

There is no emergency at this moment, but it is time **now**, for me at least, to have a thorough heart examination so I can honestly acknowledge that "**— my heart is right—.**"

Job had been deprived of all his oxen and all his sheep. His three friends brought no bullock or ram; they offered no burnt-offering; by their silence they left him to ponder his grief which was very great. Thus far, although he could not offer burnt-offerings as had been his custom, Job was still a worshipper: "he fell down upon the ground and worshipped . . ."

WILLIAM BLAKE

COMMANDER OR PASSENGER

Henry Palmieri

THERE is an incident in the life of the early disciples when they thought they did not need the Lord Jesus Christ. Is this possible? Indeed it is! As we look into this incident let us remember that it is recorded for our learning.

In the miracle of the Lord showing His power over the deep and the boisterous wind as recorded by Mark, we read that "they took Him into the ship," as they were going to the other side of the lake (Mk. 4:36).

Another has imagined them saying to the Lord something like this, "Lord, You are weary and tired. Why don't you take a much needed rest? We can manage the boat all right. Remember that a number of us were fishermen before we followed You, and we know this lake like an open book. We don't need Your help at all. You have done some wonderful miracles on the land, where You are familiar, but You don't know anything about sea-faring. That's our line. Just take it easy, we'll run the boat. Lie down here in the stern where You won't be in the way, and we'll get along fine" (A.V.R.).

You say, "How foolish of them to so treat the Lord! We would never have said those words to Him." Perhaps not in so many words (to give us the benefit of the doubt) but by our very actions we all say the same thing. I'm afraid that we are just as foolish in our actions if not in our very words.

We know the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour. We have taken Him on board just as the disciples did, but that is not sufficient. He wants to be more than a passenger or guest on board our life's boat. Taking Him as Saviour we must also acknowledge

Him as Sovereign, as Captain and Commander of our lives. It is blessed indeed to know Him as Saviour, assured of sins forgiven, saved from hell, but Christ must become Lord of the life.

The Apostle Paul could say to the Colossians, "That in all things He might have the pre-eminence" (1:18). In our lives He wants not a place along side of others, nor does He even want a prominent place which is going a step farther. He wants the only place. He must have it; and He will have it; and He shall have it. Let us yield allegiance to Him so as to be able to say, "Over me, the Son of God, the Lord from Heaven, incarnate, sacrificed, glorified, absolutely presides. In everything, at every moment, I am under His command. He is my Sovereign, and I am His bondservant."

They took Him along as a passenger, for Mark tells us that "they took Him" into the ship. They took the initiative (A.V.R.). How many of us do the same! We have the Lord Jesus Christ on board. We are taking Him along with us through life, instead of letting Him take us. How often we hear young Christians ask whether they can take the Lord to this place or that! It is not for you to take Jesus anywhere; He should take you. How many today, as the disciples years ago, take the Lord merely as a passenger, when He wants to be our Commander. He desires to be constantly in command, completely in control.

The disciples soon found out that they did need Him on the sea just as they needed Him on the shore. For this reason the storm was raised, that they might learn that they

needed Christ all the time. Oh, how we need to learn this lesson; that we are dependent on Him! He is the Captain of our salvation. He must be more than a passenger, whom we take along. He must be the Commander who controls every avenue of our being.

We must let Him take us! He is our Leader. We must follow Him.

What a privilege is ours! We can follow the greatest Leader that ever lived, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Captain of salvation. Of course, this begins with letting Christ come into your heart. Once you do this, you are saved. You become a real Christian. Then you are in a position to follow the Leader and let Him take you where He wills.

This Captain wants to be the Commander of your life. He wants your life to tell for Him. He wants you to follow every hour of every day of every week. He wants young and old whose hearts are right with God, to

stand for Christ, to be led by Him amid all that are living in sin in this wicked and perverse generation.

Are you being taken by Him? Are you being led by the Sovereign Saviour? Are you standing for Christ? Are you telling others that Christ is the only Way? Are you following the Leader, the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you know the joy of having Christ constantly in command? Christ completely in control? This should be the aim of your life and mine.

We can only accomplish these things as we yield ourselves unto Him to do His will instead of our own. Only as we let Him take us through life and not our taking Him, will life be a spirited success.

"I need Jesus, I need Jesus,
I need Jesus ev'ry day;
Need Him in the sunshine hour,
Need Him when the storms clouds
low'r;
Ev'ry day along my way,
Yes, I need Jesus."



APOLOGETICS



THE ATHEISM OF TODAY

THE ingenious but atheistic leaders of today who labor so hard to rid themselves and the world of God and His Son, Jesus Christ, are really under obligation to offer something better in exchange. To assert that "the gospel is behind the age" without supplying a gospel that is abreast of the age is not the way to lead Christians away from the comfort of the religion that has proved itself to be of enduring satisfaction and always helpful in time of need.

Modern atheism, "Christian atheism," is soliciting sympathy everywhere through many forms of propaganda. But what is there in atheism to seduce us from our allegiance to

the Son of God? Atheism, communism, rationalism — all really speak one language: "This world is all in all to us. There is no Heaven. Man is self-sufficient. There is no God. Let's be content with life here — all beyond is no concern of ours."

The modern atheist has nothing new to offer mankind. He has his stream of tradition, running down like a narrow thread from the earliest times, if that is any consolation to him. There were atheists in Palestine when the Psalmist wrote the famous words, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." There were atheists in Greece when Plato wrote to one of them, "You and your friends are not the first who have held this

notion. There have always been people more or less sick with this disease." There were atheists in the sixteenth century when Bacon wrote the words, "I had rather believe all the ancient fables than that this universal frame is without a Mind." There were atheists in the eighteenth century, when France inscribed upon her cemetery gates, "Death is an eternal sleep," and enthroned a harlot as personified Reason on the desecrated altar of God. And there are atheists now, inheritors of the traditions of their fathers. What could be more foolish than to embrace their system of negations, and thus feed "on ashes" (Isaiah 44:20).

But beware! The atheism of today assumes a respectful, even deferential tone toward the faith it seeks to destroy. It often has an air of modesty about it, and eagerly repudiates the idea of uprooting the foundations of morality. It exhibits a more Christian-like method of attack than was shown in former generations.

But assume whatever outward form it may, and clothe it in whatever garb is popular, atheism always has failed, and always will fail, to commend itself to the inner longings of mankind. The fatal weakness of the atheistic cause is this: It is a system of negations. The fatal want it always betrays is the want of harmony with the whole nature of man. Man's soul craves for certainty and satisfaction. He was made by God, and therefore has need of God, and a resistless instinct of nature urges him to feel after and to seek for God. Man was made to worship and adore; and consciously or unconsciously, he is impelled to carry out the end and purpose of his being. Man may try as he will to suppress and stifle the voice that God has implanted within him, but that voice must and will be sooner or later heard.

Blessed is the man who desires to know God, whose eyes can see His

handiwork in the natural world, and whose ears can hear His voice, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." And having heard, happy is he who walks in God's way — the way of everlasting life.

Guest Editorial, by Ernest Lloyd
(From AVERY JOURNAL)

If you are beginning to encounter some hard bumps, be glad. At least you are out of the rut.

FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

"Truly our fellowship is with the Father
and with His Son, Jesus Christ."

To "walk with God": is this some dreamer's dream,

Reserved for ancient men of different cast
Than me? For men of slowly moving years?
And must I think such holy joy is past?

And can it be, that as from distant Ur,
There is a path that leads from idol shrine,
Marked out by tent, by altar and by fire,
Yet points me to the Glory that is Thine?

And is it so, that I may walk with Thee?
May hear Thy voice above Earth's din
below?

And like old Sinai's sage and warrior saint,
May find Thy ways and see Thine After-Glow?

How can I see Invisibility?

Or how with finite mind reach to confide
Transcendent thoughts; or how with halting
thigh

Draw near, and keep apace Thy Mighty
Stride?

A mystery? There **IS** a way for all
Who thirst for God; not trod by feet, but
heart;

An eye, not needing man's external aids;
A mind, the schools of Earth cannot impart.

"The Way," to reach the Inaccessible.
"The Truth," the Great Inscrutable to show.
"The Life," and thus He opens up the eye
To see — The mind to grasp — The way to
go.

To "walk with God"? 'Tis not too late to
join

That holy band, who soared above the sod
Of transient things — of weights — besetting
sin,

And feel the Mighty Pulse of Life with God.

—J.B.N.



Topical

PROFITABLE THINGS

Alfred P. Gibbs

III The reward of godliness

It has been well said that "virtue is its own reward." This is certainly true of godliness, as we shall see. The reward of godliness is twofold, for we read: "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that **now is**, and of that which is **to come**." Thus it is profitable for the present, and also for the future. Let us think of this double reward.

(1) The present enjoyment of the life that now is.

(a) **Godliness of life** leads to a closer intimacy with the Lord Jesus, and a greater realization and appreciation of conscious communion with Him. David discovered this, and declared: "But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for Himself" (Ps. 4:3). Again he said: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant" (Ps. 25:14). The price for this more intimate fellowship with the Lord is high, but it is an investment with great profit; for the high cost of living for Christ is only exceeded by the higher cost of not living for Him! Paul could testify: "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them but dung that I might win Christ" (Phil. 3:8).

There is no substitute for heart devotion to the Lord Jesus, nor can anything compensate the believer for

the loss of this conscious communion with his Lord and Saviour. The experience of those two disciples on the Emmaus highway may well illustrate what takes place when Jesus Himself draws near and walks with His own. It is no wonder, after this season of communion, that they testified: "Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?" (Luke 24:13-32). No wonder the poet expressed himself in the following lines:

"I must have the Saviour with me,
For I dare not walk alone;
I must feel His presence near me,
And His arm around me thrown."

(b) **Godliness of life leads to an abounding joy in the Lord**, for we are told: "In Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps. 16:11). The Lord wants a rejoicing people, and in that wonderful "abiding" chapter of John 15 the Lord said to His disciples: "These things have I spoken unto you that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (Jn. 15:11). It was for "the joy that was set before Him" that our Lord "endured the cross and despised the shame" (Heb. 12:2). That joy was the perfect accomplishment of His Father's will. This joy is the present portion of all who seek to adjust their lives to His will. Such will prove the truth of that Scripture which affirms: "The joy of the Lord is your strength" (Neh. 8:10).

Though it is still true that: "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution;" it is equally true that all that will live godly shall also experience that abounding joy of the Lord which is more than adequate compensation for the suffering endured. It is recorded of the early disciples that after they had been beaten for preaching Christ, they departed . . . "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name" (Acts 5:40-41). A joyful Christian is one of the best recommendations for Christianity, and many a worldly, sickened by the emptiness of this world's fleeting pleasures, pomp, popularity and policy, has been led to seek the salvation of God because of its evidence in the joyous life of those who "live godly in Christ Jesus."

(c) Contentment of heart

We are told that "godliness, with contentment, is great gain" (I Tim. 6:6). Here godliness could be likened to the capital, out of which the interest of contentment may be drawn as often and as much as we wish. The person whose life is characterized by godliness will not be much interested in the foolish pursuit of "keeping up with the Jones'." He will heed the injunction: "Let your life be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said: 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee'" (Heb. 13:5). He will be content with such things as he has, in the shape of "all spiritual blessings" which are his in Christ Jesus (Eph. 1:3).

He will not be "envious at the prosperity of the wicked" (Ps. 73:3-17); for he knows that he possesses God's exceeding great and precious promises which have constituted him a spiritual billionaire. "Therefore having food and raiment," he will "be therewith content" (I Tim. 6-8). As he seeks to be over-anxious for noth-

ing, prayerful in everything and thankful for anything, he will know what it means to have "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding," set up a garrison in his heart and mind through Jesus Christ (Phil. 4:6-7). Surely all will be prepared to admit that such godliness, with its consequent contentment, is a most profitable acquisition!

(d) Usefulness and fruitfulness in His service.

Like the blessed man of Psalm 1, the one whose delight is in the law of the Lord, he shall be "like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." He will experience the truth of his Saviour's words when He said: "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing" (John 15:4-5).

This godliness of life, which stems from a vital union with Christ and constant communion with the Lord, results in the believer being both usable by the Lord and fruitful for the Lord. Surely such a life can truly be described as being "profitable unto all things." God's desire for His redeemed people is that they "might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col. 1:10). This well sums up what is implied by godliness of life. Would that we all knew more of it!

(2) The future profit in the life that is to come.

This present comparatively short life is but a training ground or school, which prepares us for the "ages to come" in the which God is

to "shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:7). At the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, those who have died in Christ are to be raised and given glorified bodies. Their spirits, which are already with Christ, He will bring with Him, to be reunited to their glorified bodies. Those Christians who are alive at His coming shall then be raptured and, in their now glorified bodies, shall be caught up to be for all eternity with the One who loved them and gave Himself for them (I Thess. 4:13-18). This is the great hope of the Christian.

The profitableness of godliness, as seen in a life lived for Christ, in a world that crucified Him, will then be realized in full measure. We are told that "When He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (I John 3:2). The flesh will be left behind forever, no more to mar our communion with Him. In our glorified bodies, we shall stand before His judgment seat, and He will then correctly evaluate the quality of our devotion to Him, and our service for Him which we have rendered on earth, and reward us accordingly. There will be no regrets then that we lived godly and Christ-honoring lives for Him. The only regret will be that we were not more devoted to Him. (See Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10).

In that coming day, every Christian will agree with Paul that "the sufferings of this present time are not

worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18). His: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!" will prove more than ample compensation for all we endured while seeking to live "godly in Christ Jesus" (Matt. 25:21). Yes, the day of examination, compensation and glorification is ahead!

May it be ours, to so adjust our lives, in the light of His coming, that we shall merit the commendation and the crown He will give to those who have acted on the proposition that "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come!"

"Let all that look for hasten
That coming joyful day,
By earnest consecration,
To walk the narrow way;
By gathering in the lost ones
For whom our Lord did die,
For the crowning day that's coming
By and by!"

O the crowning day is coming!
Is coming by and by
When our Lord shall come in power
And glory from on high!
O the glorious sight will gladden
Each waiting, watchful eye,
In the crowning day that's coming
By and by.

"Being an heir of glory I would, by God's grace, rather break stones on the road for Him than be put to the drudgery of ruling an empire. Spiritual prosperity is always attended with strong temptation to the high thought, the lofty imagination. The worst temptations are those which so pamper and please the flesh that they do not vex us at all; they are perilous by their deceitfulness."

R. C. CHAPMAN



...for Youth

CHRISTIAN USE OF LEISURE

Horace G. Lockett

NOT many years ago the use of leisure presented few problems since so many people had very little. Stores were open most evenings, office hours included Saturday, and employees in industrial plants worked from early to late. Now stores are open few evenings and stagger the hours of their employees; not many offices open on Saturday and every new industrial contract sees a reduction in the weekly hours of work.

Our educators then began to see that they had a double task: (1) to educate young people for their life work; (2) to guide them to use their leisure time profitably. The old adage is true, "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do." For the Christian the problem of using his leisure time profitably is also a double one for he has a two-fold citizenship: (1) on earth, (2) in Heaven.

Two general principles should govern the Christian's life and these, of necessity, apply very strongly to his use of leisure. (1) God's people in Old Testament times are referred to in Isaiah 43:7 in this way — "Everyone who is called by My name, whom I created for My glory, whom I formed and made." "Called by His name, created for His glory" — what a challenge to appropriate conduct! The New Testament (I Cor. 6:19, 20) presents the same challenge, "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price therefore glorify God in your body."

(2) In I Corinthians 10, Paul discusses the Christian attitude towards food and drink that have been offered to idols. Should he partake of it? He concludes (verse 31). "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Then, almost as an afterthought he slips in the words, "whatsoever ye do" and these prove decidedly embarrassing at times. They are directed to every phase of our life, including leisure. Paul's conclusion in verse 32 is most clearly expressed in Weymouth's translation, "Do not be causes of stumbling, either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God."

The purposes for which we should use our leisure time may be grouped under three major headings: Self-improvement; Recreation; Service. Our Christianity will be shown by our choices in these three divisions.

SELF-IMPROVEMENT

Under this heading we will make first a broad division into (a) General, (b) Spiritual. Under the General we shall first consider **the Reading of Good Books**. We could hardly have taught English for forty years in a Teachers' College and be among those who say that a Christian should read nothing but the Bible, although if leisure time is **very limited** that might well be the advice. Reading good books: furnishes us with ideas, enlarges our vocabulary and moulds our style of speaking or writing. Sometimes we are amazed by

the fashion of speaking and the vocabulary of some who have little formal education but who have made the English Bible a life-time study; nothing can surpass the diction of the King James version of the Scriptures. Many modern books, however, classed as good literature present ideals far removed from the teaching of the Bible. The Christian is urged to see that he chooses **good literature** in the fullest sense of the word.

In the second place, we shall consider the use of Television as a means of improvement. Whatever our opinion of the perils connected with Television, and they are many, we may as well realize that Television is here to stay. It is being used increasingly in all types of educational institutions and some predict that the TV screen will eventually displace the teacher. Through it we may visit all continents and get an outline of many important events in history or the present day. In the TV guide for the week in which I am writing, we have interesting and instructive documentaries on Leningrad, the Danube and The City of the Sea (St. John's, Newfoundland), visits to Jack Miner's Bird Sanctuary and California's Marineland of the Pacific Ocean and for music-lovers an hour with Bach, Beethoven and Mozart.

The October 1966 issue of Moody Monthly contains a number of articles on 'A Christian View of Television.' It is well worth reading.

The third means of improvement which I am suggesting is one which I find much used in my own assembly, Bethany, Hamilton. We have a number of elementary school teachers who for some years used, or are still using, a great deal of their leisure time in evening classes and summer courses to improve their standing and eventually qualify for their B.A. degree. In a large university city like Hamilton, evening classes of various types are given and it is amazing to see how many avail themselves of them. A Christian con-

cerned to fit himself to do his best work undoubtedly commends the gospel and should also in the end make himself a more useful servant of Christ.

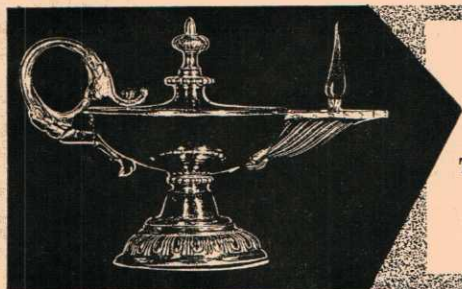
I may surprise you by adding participation in a school or university athletic team as an important means of self-improvement. During my forty-five years in educational work I was always actively associated with one or more athletic teams. I am convinced that if athletics are properly conducted, they develop in the participant qualities that make for good citizenship, both in respect of his every day life and his heavenly citizenship. Team work should develop a spirit of co-operation, so essential in ordinary life and in the church; keen competition should lead to self-control and ability to take success and set-backs well. One can hardly call participation "recreation" since it frequently involves keeping going when somewhat exhausted. This quality of "stick-to-itiveness" is a very important one in life in general and in Christian work in particular.

The factors mentioned so far, are concerned with development in general and might be recommended to anyone. It is a tragedy, however, if the Christian is not concerned with spiritual development. What steps can he take to promote spiritual growth?

At the Guelph Bible School a good deal of stress was placed on the morning Quiet Time and at our request, A. P. Gibbs wrote a pamphlet on the subject which is still available. Put the Quiet Time, even if it has to be short, on your morning program and you will never regret it. Nothing can take the place of individual Bible Study.

In a busy world there is a danger that we may substitute attendance at meetings for this individual study. Lists of helpful books: commentaries, Bible dictionaries, etc. are avail-

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Prophecy

THE THRONES OF SCRIPTURE

A. Naismith

The King's Throne: A Throne of Righteousness.

Scripture Readings: Isaiah 32:1-2. Matthew 25:31-34. Revelation 20:1-8.

The day approaches when the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God will be in manifestation, and the Son of God shall sit on the Throne of His Glory: "Unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom" (Heb. 1:8).

There are five reasons for believing in a future millennium, a thousand years of peace and righteousness

when Christ Himself will reign over the earth: **First**, the literal interpretation of Scripture, including the Old Testament, requires this in order to be properly understood. **Second**, a larger body of Scripture is devoted to this than to any other biblical theme. **Third**, there is a clear distinction throughout the Bible between Israel and the Church, and this makes the millennium as taught in the Word of God a possibility. **Fourth**, six times in Revelation 20 the reign of one thousand years, the millennium, is mentioned. **Fifth**, the prophecy in Ezekiel 40-48 is concerning

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able. Books are expensive but a wise choice of each purchase will enable you to build a satisfactory library.

Bible courses, such as those issued by the Emmaus Bible School, help to systematize our Bible Study. In many cases groups work together and thus Christian fellowship is added to the value derived from the study itself.

Attendance at the regular meetings of the local church promotes growth. The Bible exhortation (Heb. 10:25 R.S.V.) is "Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some." Uniting with others in prayer and worship is stimulating and the ministry from gifted brethren should increase one's Bible knowledge. A sense of responsibility will

make us support the gospel testimony by our presence, even if we have no active part in that particular service.

The summer vacation affords a fine opportunity for growth in the things of God which many, unfortunately, are neglecting. It is true that with the present-day tension in the business world some need a quiet holiday in a summer cottage. To ignore God, however, in vacation plans and rush off thoughtlessly into a worldly atmosphere divorced from Christian privileges, may result in spiritual shipwreck. A Bible conference, if well-chosen, supplies a happy combination of helpful ministry, delightful fellowship and relaxation. Try a Bible conference or camp next summer.

Israel, her land, her temple, and her priests and sacrifices. This prophecy has not been fulfilled. Hosea 3 and 4 describe Israel's condition today.

The one thousand years of Christ's reign on earth will result in mighty and varied changes. **First, conditions are imposed:** the destruction of the rebel hosts (Rev. 19:16-21), the dealing of God with the nations (Matt. 25:31-46), the deliverance of the nation of Israel from Gentile domination (Zech. 14:1-15).

Second, characteristics are displayed: "When the prophets paint the millennial earth, they dip their pens in the rainbow." **First,** righteousness will be established (Jer. 23:6, Jehovah Tsidkenu Isa. 32:1). **Second,** peace will be enjoyed (Isa. 2:4. Micah 4:3). **Third,** Creation will be emancipated (Rom. 8:21. Isa. 65:20, etc.). **Fourth,** Israel the nation will be enlarged (Ezek. 47:13-48:35). **Fifth,** death will be eliminated (Isa. 65:19-22).

Third, the capital and centre of government will be appointed: Jerusalem, called the City of God (Psa. 48:1; 87:3), the City of the Great King (Psa. 48:2. Matt. 5:35), the Throne of Jehovah (Jer. 3:17), Jehovah-Shammah (Ezek. 48:35), and

the Source of Living Waters (Zech. 14:8).

Fourth, the covenants fulfilled: The Law given by Moses was a conditional covenant; the following are unconditional: the Abramic Covenant, promising blessing to Israel and the nations through Israel (Micah 7:19-20); the Davidic Covenant, promising a ruler in the line of David (Jer. 23:5); the Palestinian Covenant, promising the land forever and its fertility (Isa. 65:9. Ezek. 36:28); the New Covenant, promising national cleansing, salvation and spiritual blessing (Jer. 31:31-34. This Scripture is quoted in Hebrews 8:8-12).

Fifth, the constitution indicated: the Ruler, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Isa. 9:6), the Son of Man (Matt. 25:30), the Branch of Jehovah (Isa. 4:2), Jehovah Tsidkenu (Jer. 23:6), the Ancient of Days (Dan. 7:13), the Rod of Jesse (Isa. 11:1), the King (Psa. 2:6. Matt. 25:34), the Sun of Righteousness (Mal. 4:2), the Shepherd (Ezek. 37:24), and the Judge (Acts 17:31).

The Regent will be of David (Jer. 30:9. Ezek. 34:24. Hos. 3:5). The judges will be appointed (Isa. 32:1. Matt. 19:28. I Cor. 6:2-3), and also administrators (Luke 19:17-19. Matt. 25:21-23).

BOOK REVIEW

How to Build a Happy Home; B. Charles Hostetter: Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A.

If the words of Hobson are true, "Christianity begins at home," we build our characters there, and what we become in after years is largely determined by our training and home environment, then we should construct for ourselves and our families a happy home.

Charles Hostetter is an author courageous enough to write on Delinquent Parents, Divorce, and how to view matters through your children's eyes, as well as on many other aspects of family life.

The fundamental principles set forth in the pages of his book are highly recommended.

Price \$2.20. Home Evangel Books Ltd. 23 Hobson Avenue, Toronto 16, Canada.



Expository

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

Robert and David McClurkin

HEBREWS CHAPTER 4

Rest is the repose of the soul in God. We taste its sweetness when we come to Christ (Matt. 11:28). We continue in its enjoyment when our lives are lived in the will of God (Matt. 11:29-30). Then when our little day is done here we shall enter into the fullness of God's rest where no opposing forces will ever disturb it for ever (Rev. 14:13). It is because of these opposing forces that would disturb our rest in God now, that the four exhortations of our chapter are given, "Let us fear," "Let us labor," "Let us hold fast," "Let us come boldly to the Throne of Grace."

A sad epitaph is raised over the history of God's earthly people, the nation of Israel, "So we see then that they could not enter in because of unbelief (3:19). They came short of God's rest because they doubted the power of God, the love of God and the Word of God (Num. 13:31, 14:1-3, Heb. 4-2). In chapter 4 the writer turns to the needs of God's heavenly people. Israel has been labelled a failure, but in chapter 4 the Christian, Israel's spiritual counterpart, has described for him in explicit detail three beautiful and necessary provisions that are designed to lead him into the enjoyment of God's rest. These are: the Word of God (vs. 12-13), the Great High Priest (vs. 14-15), and the Throne of Grace (v. 16).

But first, let us look in a little more detail at the rest of God (vs. 1:11) that He provides by His grace, and into which He would lead us.

As we review with joy the various aspects of this rest as unfolded in these verses, we cannot help but realize that God's provision along the way is meant to keep us from **wavering**. This rest acts as a goal or object in the Christian life. Just as the goal posts in a football game govern the movement and action of the players, so the rest of God establishes the perimeter and progression as well as the goal of the Christian life.

The writer painting his description of the rest of God, chooses four colors, as it were, to brighten the course of a life lived to the will of God.

(a) **The color in Creation Rest** (v. 4). Inasmuch as God did rest the seventh day from His work so the rest to the Christian will be a rest from **work**. The toils of the day will seem as nothing when we bask in the sunlight of His presence for ever.

(b) **The color in Christian Rest** (v. 3). The writer draws an analogy from the very basic Christian experience, that of believing. He says that when we believed we entered into rest. All that we were — untamable, disobedient and unlovable — we placed in the everloving hands of the God of Eternity. Our future was hopeless so this rest became to us a rest from **worry**. The Spirit of God

is simply saying that all that we have entered into by faith down here, one day will be a grand reality when we rest in the comforts and perfection of Heaven and home.

(c) **The color in Canaan Rest (v. 8).** Canaan is ever in Scripture a picture of that which the Christian may enter and possess by conflict. Rest came when the battle was over and the inheritance taken from the hand of the enemy. It became a rest from war. Paul draws a picture of this Canaan rest in Ephesians. In that Epistle there is an inheritance purchased at infinite cost (1:18-23) to be possessed by faith (v. 18). There are opposing forces to rob us of the enjoyment of that rest (6:10-18). The indwelling Spirit of God is the Earnest, down payment, with the greater and more wonderful things yet to come (1:13-14).

(d) **The color in Celestial Rest (v. 9).** The word for rest here is different from that used elsewhere in the chapter. It is the Greek word sabbatismos which literally means "to keep a sabbath." It is really an Old Testament word referring to the sabbatic observations in the Book of Leviticus. Used in this connection we believe it has the thought of perpetuity. So our pilgrimage will soon be over and the journey done. It will be a rest from **walking** a rest that will never be interrupted. Is there any wonder the poet wrote:

"Stepping ashore and finding it Heaven;

Of taking hold of a hand and finding it God's hand,

Of breathing a new air and finding it celestial air,

Of feeling invigorated and finding it immortality,

Of passing from storm and tempest to an unbroken calm,

Of waking up and finding it home."

The first thing that God supplies in order that we enter in and enjoy the rest of God is His Word (vs. 12-13). This is the true Urim and Thummim (lights and perfections) in the breast-

plate of our Great High Priest. This provision, with its positive, powerful action of discerning right from wrong, is necessary in our Christian experience to save us from **wilfulness**. There are five things suggested here about the Word:

It is vibrant in its life. The Greek word for quick is *zao*, and literally means alive. It is the same word used by Paul in Philippians 1:21, where he said, "To me to live is Christ." What is the lesson? Is it not this? The life that filters through the pages of the Word of God making it a living Book, will begin to flow through that individual who diligently addicts himself to it. Paul advises Timothy that the Word of God was vital if "the man of God was to be thoroughly furnished." In other words the man of God must become a "master craftsman" in his use of the Word of God.

It is vigorous in its action. The word for powerful is not the word normally used. This word is only used twice elsewhere in the New Testament. It is used by Paul in I Corinthians 16:9, where he says that an effectual door was opened unto him and then in Philemon 6 where the faith of Philemon is said to be effectual. Both verses have the thought of something being active and operative. Such is the thought here. It really means life (the first word) in action.

It is vindictive in its judgment. First, he uses the analogy of the sword. The sword is always the symbol of judgment (Gen. 3:24, Rev. 19:15). Self-judgment is the most difficult and yet the most necessary experience the Christian will ever encounter. Yet it is only when the sword with its two edges, is allowed to work in us that we will be trimmed to a useful size for God.

Second, he uses the analogy of the judge. The word *discerner* comes from the same root as the word *judge*. Hence the Word of God acts as a judge of the thoughts and in-

tents of the heart. Thoughts refer to what is deliberated and intent to motives. Thoughts point to my occupation and intent to my motivation. When these are judged in the thought-and-intent stage it is not too late to have a life in which actions are ruled by the Word of God.

It is violent in its operation. The word piercing literally means "coming through." In doing so it divides the soul and spirit from the joints and marrow. That is it separates that which we can see and feel from that which is intangible. May we put it another way. That which is tangible represents the material or carnal things and that which is intangible represents the spiritual part of our being. The Word of God divides between the two. In its search for the sins of body, soul and spirit, it seeks our separation from all that would disqualify for God's pleasure. Separation is always the loving response of the redeemed soul to the claims of the Son of God.

It is valuable in its revelation. The word for opened (v. 13) is the Greek word tetrakelismena and is rooted in another Greek word trakeles, meaning "neck." What is the significance? When the priest offered the sacrifice he was obligated to ensure that the animal was indeed without spot or blemish. He, therefore, just before he plunged in the knife, took hold of the animal's neck, held his head back and in so doing exposed the entire body of the animal to his scrutiny. The Word of God likewise exposes our whole life. It points out our failures; governs our actions; guides us in our pathway that God has marked out for us.

The second provision of God to enable us to enter in and enjoy His rest is our Great High Priest. His ministry is designed to support us in our weakness. The Spirit of God emphasizes His two Names here. Jesus is His earthly Name for it was given to Him at birth. It is the Name that links Him to His people,

"Thou shalt call His Name Jesus for He shall save His people from their sins." The Son of God on the other hand unquestionably links Him to the Godhead, for He is one with the Father and the Spirit. In between these two Names is the word "priest." The Latin word for priest is pontifex and means bridgebuilder. Thus, the Lord Jesus Christ is linked to His people and to the Throne of God. As the divinely ordained Priest (bridgebuilder), He spans the gap.

The writer uses a word that carefully describes His sympathy toward His people. It is translated here, "Touched with the feeling of." It is the Greek word sumpatheo. It comes from two other words, sum, meaning with and patheo, meaning to suffer. Thus we have an High Priest who suffers with His people. Not only does He lead us home by the path that He Himself has trodden before us, but in all the grief that fills the heart, the Man of Sorrows has a part. Like the high priest of Israel (Exod. 28) that bore the names of Israel upon his shoulder and his breast, and wore the mitre upon his brow, so the Lord Jesus imparts His strength (Heb. 2:18), His love (4:15) and His wisdom (2 Tim. 1:7) to enable us to have our whole satisfaction in God.

The third provision of God for His people is the Throne of Grace (v. 16). This is designed to save us from **wandering**. The word "boldly" is interesting here. There are two other words translated boldly in the New Testament. First, there is the Greek word tahmao which has the thought of presumption, forwardness or overstepping one's bound of authority. It is the word used of Joseph of Arimethea when he "boldly" craved the body of Jesus. This is not the word used here. Second, there is the word thareo which has the thought of being confident that something will happen, and, therefore, speaking boldly about it. It is used in Hebrews 13:6.

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THE FORUM



Dear Editor: Feb. 21, 1967

I have decided **not** to renew (Food for the Flock). See other side (application form) for part of my reasons.

I seem to find that all our Assembly magazines indulge too much in generalities in doctrine, which is all we appear to care about. There is, to me, a sad lack of real practical, down to earth teaching; too much showing off our erudition and our knowledge of Greek idiom. As one said to me recently, "We are made so 'heavenly minded that we are of no earthly use.' "

As on page 29 (February number Food for the Flock), I might suggest that **unmovable** might mean not to be motionless, as so many Christians among us are. Many could confess if they were honest enough that they

never give out a tract from one year end to the other, never speak to a person about his soul. Some do not even subscribe to one Christian magazine. I subscribe to 13 (not all assembly mags.). The others are much more for practicality than ours. Some scarcely ever read a Christian book; many have not purchased one in years.

The **worship meeting** Sunday morning is mostly the **morning meeting**. The lack of reverence! Elder brethren cannot pick out a worship hymn. The stereotyped prayer! We in U.S.A. will have to learn the deference, homage, and obedience due to a throne-occupant. I have seen three queens, two kings, and a prince in my time, and were we to come into their presence, we would not be allowed to adopt that lolling, crossed-

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This is not the word used here. The peculiar word chosen by the Spirit to describe the Christian as he approaches the Throne of Grace is the word *parresia*. It means to have absolute right. Based on the work of Christ the way to the Throne has been opened to the Christian. The Israelite stood without the tent in fear and trembling. The Blood of Christ assures the Christian's right to the Throne.

Two things are dispensed from the Throne, grace and mercy. It is pardoning mercy for the past and helping grace for the future. Mercy for our failures and grace for our weaknesses.

It is to be noted that the phrase "in time of need" is one Greek word — *ukairos*. It is used only once more and means suitable assistance. It does not mean that we can secure help today for to-morrow's problems. It does mean that today's problems can find their solution at the Throne of Grace today. The reservoir is

full. The resources are never diminished.

Perhaps the key to this whole passage is found in chapter 4:2. It is the word **faith**. It is indeed interesting that the verb to fall, *pipto*, is used in only two settings in the Hebrews. In chapter 3:17, it describes those who through lack of faith "fell" in the wilderness. In chapter 11:30, it describes the "fall" of the walls of Jericho by faith. The walls could represent any obstacles that face the Christian and which are overcome by faith. Perhaps here we have struck the nerve-centre of the question, what makes the difference between a vibrant, successful Christian and a weak, defeated Christian? The answer is faith! Faith that appropriates all the provisions that God has made; faith that reaches out beyond the things of time and sense; faith whose horizons are not limited by hills and mountains or walls; faith that lays hold of the Throne of God and makes those unknowable, unfathomable spiritual things his very own.

legged, sloppy attitude that so many of our people affect. When these things are mentioned, one is put down as addicted to malice and evil speaking.

We are now divided into two camps, the young people and the rest of us. The young with their love of sports. Now they are going around performing cantatas. The sisters, some old enough to be grandmothers, with their short knee-exposing skirts. Some in the morning meeting sitting opposite me exposing their thighs. Were our teaching brethren to mention these things, they would be accused of scraping ministry and that would hurt their prestige, their reputations, and their offerings; they have to be so gracious, yea, circumspect. "Don't disturb the status quo, and don't, for any sake, tread on my toe."

All the weakness in the church is not in the pews, watch our peregrinating brethren, hundreds, yea, thousands of miles between stops. To my critical mind, this doesn't seem like Spirit guidance.

I could go on, but doubtless you are shocked by this time. I have even overheard elder brethren discussing football, between meetings at a conference. As soon as the morning service is over, some of our brethren are talking about Monday golf, and the sisters, the dress sale down town. I rebuked one of our young men when he said that he had been watching a baseball game on television on a Sunday afternoon. "What's the matter with that, it's a sport isn't it?" was his reply.

I could go on, but I refrain lest I weary you or perhaps antagonize you; I am not griping; I am mourning.

R. R. B.

Dear R. R. B.

We are puzzled by the many general indictments against the assemblies in this letter and by its only word of commendation, a commendation of non-assembly magazines.

That there is weakness and carnality, all admit, but we are exhorted to strengthen the things that remain. **Food for the Flock** endeavours so to do. Such articles as "Feminine Fashion" by Dr. James Naismith; "The New Morality" by Dr. Paul Irwin,

both have a direct bearing on conditions described in this letter. For both of these, requests for reprints have been received.

Daniel did not say, "Our elders," this, that, or the other, he prayed, "O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee, but unto us confusion of faces We have sinned against Thee We have rebelled." He then records, "Whilst I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people," his prayers were answered. Recovery for Israel began with Daniel upon his knees in prayer before the Word of God; recovery for us does not lie in indictments but in confession and prayer.

The Apostle Paul in three statements indicates the proper attitude and the proper motivation of ministry even in a carnal church: "Let all things be done unto edifying" (I Cor. 14:26). "Let all things be done decently and in order" (I Cor. 14:40). "Let all your things be done with charity-love" (I Cor. 15:14). Any practical ministry written in this attitude and thus motivated will be acceptable to the Editorial Committee of Food for the Flock.

J. G.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother:

There's an abundance of diagnosing going on these days and I'm sure most Christians are aware, to some degree, that the Church of Jesus Christ is sick. There is an endless list of symptoms and their causes, and we must confess that we are guilty! But, where do we find the remedy?

One of the needed medicines is suggested in the scathing rebuke of the Lord speaking through the prophet Jeremiah:

"An appalling and horrible thing has happened in the land:

The prophets prophesy falsely and the priests rule at their direction;

MY PEOPLE LOVE TO HAVE IT SO,

But what will you do when the end comes?"

Signed, Galatians 2:20.

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