

The Good News



**ARE We
Back on the
Track?**

**Rebirth of
Big Sandy**

**How to Develop
Godly Patience**

**Coping
as a Single
Parent**

**What Psychologists
Don't Know About
Child Rearing**

By Herbert W. Armstrong

The Good News

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COVER: Psychologists cannot rightly teach you how to rear children. Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong explains why beginning on page 2. Photo by Roland Rees.

Letters

How we know we have the truth

I wanted to thank you for your "Personal" article in the June-July issue of *The Good News*. The next time a friend or relative asks me how we know we have the truth I think I'll have a reasonable, sound answer for them.

We can all see the Church and brethren becoming more of a family-type unit as a result of what Christ is doing through you in His Church and we all pray for you every day.

It's a great comfort to have a real, solid, dependable body of believers around us who are all striving to become what God wants us to be. Your efforts are bearing abundant fruit.

Danny L. Baker
Shelby, Ohio

"Alcohol in God's Church"

As I was reading your *Good News* magazine, I came across your article, namely, "Alcohol in God's Church: What's Right Use?" [June-July].

Now I don't believe the Bible sanctions the use of alcohol, period, and I don't believe [Jesus] made fermented wine at that wedding, period. I don't think a person should even taste liquor in any form, as the Bible says, "Yield not to temptation, because if a person tastes wine or alcohol in any form, it might create a hankering for it."

So I say leave it completely alone, because these alcohol beverages are killing thousands of people every year. It is like taking poison, and we know that is a sin. I have lived nearly 91 years without tasting the stuff, and have no desire to start using it now.

Gertrude Wigham
Madera, Calif.

"Guide Your Children"

All your items in *The Good News* magazine have value, but once in a while, one of the items will really leap off the page to strike home with a responsive chord and I wish to bring one such item to your attention.

The item, "Guide Your Children Toward God's Family," written by Robert E. Fahey in the October-November, 1980, issue of *The Good News*!

The item really gave me an insight into my relationship with my 17-year-old son and 12-year-old daughter, and in discussions with them, I am sure we have all been rewarded.

Dan Jay
Rarotonga, Cook Islands

Rebirth of Big Sandy

*Ambassador College at Big Sandy has been BORN AGAIN!
And what a glorious resurrection!*

By Herbert W. Armstrong

WHAT an exciting start! The Big Sandy campus came alive with a burst of love, harmony, dedication!

Ambassador at Big Sandy, Tex., is only a two-year junior college at present (though it may become more within the first two years) — but it started off with one of the most enthusiastic and joyful starts of any year at any of the three Ambassador campuses of the past 34 years.

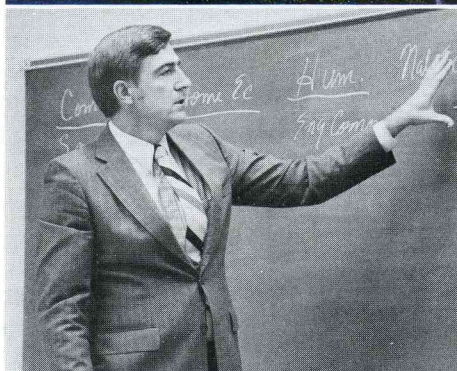
Orientation of students began Thursday, Aug. 20. The faculty-student reception began the preceding evening. Most students already were registered by that time.

The opening activities continued on past the Sabbath, Aug. 22. Brethren from a number of surrounding churches came for the Sabbath service, with perhaps the largest attendance ever gathered together at Big Sandy except at the Feast of Tabernacles.

Brethren of the entire area seemed overjoyed that the Big Sandy campus had come alive again. Rejoicing permeated the air. And God blessed the air with beautiful weather. Some 4,000 attended the Sabbath service.

Mrs. Armstrong and I, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Fahey, Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Neff, Ruth Nestor, Rona Martin and Mel Ollinger flew over in the G-II jet Thursday. Crew members Mr. and Mrs. Aaron Dean also attended the various activities.

Thursday evening at 7 p.m. the stu-



dent-faculty reception was held in the registration building adjoining the Feast site. I made a very short introductory speech of welcome to new students. Then the new freshmen came by one by one to shake hands with Mrs. Armstrong and me.

We were more than well impressed

Field house and dining hall on Big Sandy campus (top); Academic Dean Donald Ward; Mr. Armstrong greets Student Body President Mark Mounts while Deputy Chancellor Leon Walker looks on.

by the evident quality of the new students. They were beaming. Had not
(Continued on page 26)

What Psychologists Don't Know About Child Rearing

By Herbert W. Armstrong

HERE is a proverb in the Bible most people do not understand. It says, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6).

Yet many have believed they had followed that scripture, and when the child became a middle-aged adult he had departed from it completely.

I know a man approaching old age, who was taught the truth of God from infancy. As a growing child he was trained — even as one would train a dog to do certain things by repeatedly training him to do a certain thing until it became habit. Yet, passing middle age into old age, he departed from it. WHY?

Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived. His proverb was inspired by God. It is part of the WORD OF GOD. Then why did this particular man depart from it?

Because the father who trained the child did not UNDERSTAND at the time the other scriptural teaching about the SPIRIT IN MAN!

He assumed, like most do, that Solomon meant training as one would a dog, by teaching him to *do* certain things, enforced by a system of rewards for performance and punishment for disobedience. One can train a dog that way. The trick becomes fixed habit and the dog will continue doing it on command repeatedly.

But what almost no one understands is the difference between a dog's brain and a child's MIND.

The dog's brain is almost precisely like a child's brain — form and composition almost precisely the same. But the human child is born with a spirit that imparts the power of intellect to the human brain. The human brain is accompanied by a spirit in

connection with it. The brain of a dog, a horse, an elephant is not.

This human spirit enables the human person to THINK — to REASON — to CALCULATE — to MAKE DECISIONS. An elephant's brain is larger than a human brain, and designed precisely like it — just as good qualitatively — yet the elephant brain cannot think, reason, calculate, make decisions and choices. Like a dog, an elephant can be trained to do certain tricks, such as people enjoy seeing in a circus.

Animals are equipped with instinct. A house dog automatically by instinct barks if one approaches the house. The dog does not THINK, weigh the matter, decide, "Shall I bark or shall I keep silent?" But I suppose that by repeated training a dog could be taught not to bark.

NOW UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE!

The child's mind can think and

reason. It can acquire knowledge a dog or an elephant cannot know. It is stated in I Corinthians 2:11, "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save [by] the spirit of a man which is in him." A dog or an elephant cannot know what a man knows. Man's KNOWING, and power of self-decision, is imparted to the brain by the spirit that is in man.

The spirit in man

Now Adam, the first created human, was created with a spirit in him. The spirit was not a "soul." The breathing physical man was the soul (Gen. 2:7). The spirit in him did not impart life to him. His breathing was the breath of life. "The blood thereof is the life thereof." So says God.

Adam was made to need KNOWLEDGE that no animal can know. He was made to need three kinds of knowledge: 1) knowledge for contact and relationship with God, 2) knowledge to have relationship to other people and 3) knowledge to deal with things — matter. Adam was created with a human spirit by which of himself he could acquire knowledge to deal with things.

Man has acquired by himself knowledge to build houses, make and operate automobiles, airplanes, computers. Yet in 6,000 years man has never learned how to get along with fellowman. Husband and wife clash and divorce. Parents can't understand and properly train children. Children too often resent parents. Family can't live happily with next-door neighbor. Management and labor clash, races of people clash, nations war against one another.

And man has not learned — and doesn't seem to want to know — how to have a close association with his Maker.

WHY?

Because man was made with one spirit, unlike animals, but he was made to need another Spirit — the Holy Spirit of GOD.

The Creator freely offered His Spirit, which also begets eternal LIFE, to Adam. But Adam rejected the Spirit of God (tree of LIFE) and took TO HIMSELF the knowledge of good and evil. He decided to acquire and produce by himself his own knowledge. Adam's mind, as a result, was

only HALF COMPLETE. He was not mentally "all there"!

But, LIMITED to physical knowledge of the materialistic — knowledge that could come into his brain by sight, hearing, tasting, smelling, feeling — he still had a MIND that could think, reason, calculate, make decisions.

What an animal does is automatic by instinct. What a human does is by THOUGHT — by REASON — by DECISION!

How to "train up a child"

Now see where this leads us.

You train a growing child as you would train a dog or an elephant to do certain things a certain way. In some cases, because it has become habit, he may not change it.

BUT he has a MIND that can THINK, reason, DECIDE what to do and DIRECT his actions differently from parental teaching — especially if an attitude of resistance, hostility, resentment of authority or prejudice — or if conformity to custom of his peers — causes a change of mind —

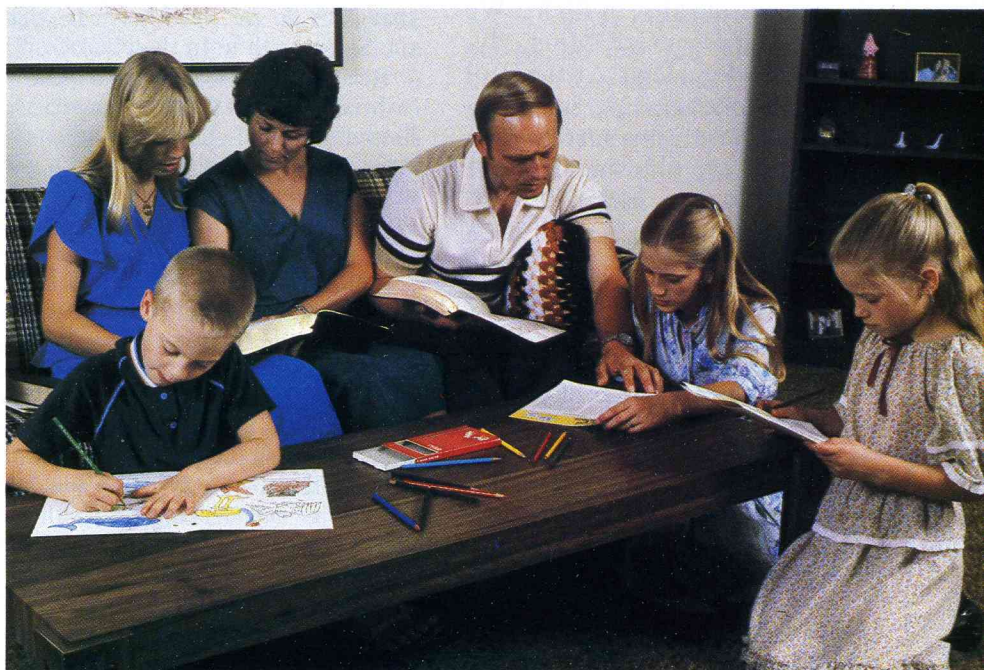
pictures, but in ATTITUDES of selfishness, hostility, disagreement, resentment and self-will. Most parents NEGLECT TEACHING THEIR CHILDREN'S MINDS UNTIL TEACHERS AT SCHOOL, about age 7, can teach them.

BUT SATAN DOES NOT NEGLECT YOUR CHILD'S MIND! Satan begins broadcasting into it when only a few months old attitudes of selfishness and self-centeredness.

HOW, THEN, should you train up a child in the way he should go?

NOT ONLY by habit to do certain things a certain way, as you would train a dog, but train him to THINK FOR HIMSELF!

Train him to think and decide according to the spirit and attitude of GOD'S LAW — love toward others, consideration for the good and welfare of others — and teach him that Satan's way of selfishness and jealousy, envy, antagonism toward others, is wrong. Teach him to HONOR his parents. Teach the principle and ATTITUDE of God's LAW of LOVE to God and LOVE to other people.



and in later life because of DISAGREEMENT he may entirely depart from childhood training. Where, then, does this lead us?

In earliest childhood, Satan begins to work on the child's mind. He broadcasts NOT in words, sounds or

The psychologists cannot rightly teach you how to rear children. They do not KNOW what the human mind is. Unless one has the Holy Spirit — and I know of no such psychologists — they are incompetent to teach child rearing. □

Photo by Warren Watson

ARE We Back on the Track?— When We Lack Faith?

Is it because there is no God in the homes of our families, that we rely on “the god of Ekron”?

By Herbert W. Armstrong

I am shocked — saddened — discouraged — hurt!

I am writing this in flight. We just took off from Orr, Minn., flying back to Pasadena. At the SEP camp I spoke to 728, including 280 brethren from surrounding churches. I was informed that the youths in camp habitually demand a doctor for every little thing. It seems they have been taught at home to rely on doctors rather than God.

When it is suggested that they may be anointed by a minister of God, in prayer for God to heal, as God PROMISES in James 5:14-15, they will consent, but seem to regard it as a perfunctory ritual of no effectuality, and still demand a doctor who can make them well. Their faith is wholly in the human doctor, not in God. **Apparently their parents have no faith that God can keep His promises, and have not relied on God for healing their children.**

Brethren, I was shocked. It was like being stabbed in the heart. We are the generation looking for the coming of Christ and the Kingdom of God. We are the Bride of Christ. We

have to be READY for His coming, or the door to eternal life and salvation will be SLAMMED IN OUR FACES (Matt. 25:10-12)! Jesus said, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches”!

Read again these solemn scriptures: “Christ . . . loved the church, and gave himself for it . . . That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Eph. 5:25-27).

And, “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready” (Rev. 19:7). The Church as a whole will be ready. But the passage in Matthew 25 shows those individuals in it — or who profess to be in it — and are lukewarm and lacking in faith in God’s Word will have the door slammed in their faces!

Brethren, ARE YOU READY? I believe the Church as a whole is rapidly getting ready. But apparently some are not. God says, **“WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE HIM”** (Heb. 11:6).

Work up faith?

But some will make the excuse, “I just can’t seem to work up enough

faith.” What you mean is, “I don’t believe God will keep His promises — I don’t believe God’s Word, the Bible.” God says, “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17).

Jesus ministered as the Son of man. He said: “Of myself I can do nothing. The father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.” Jesus had, by the Spirit of God, the GIFT of healing, as mentioned in I Corinthians 12:9. Peter had it. Paul had it. Only a few had it.

But to MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH, God says: “Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he hath committed sins, they shall be forgiven him” (Jas. 5:14-15).

God wants us to BELIEVE Him — believe what He says — believe He is able — believe it IS HIS WILL to do what He promises — and believe He WILL do it! Do you have to “work up faith” to believe God is able — God will keep His PROMISES?

A woman who called me to anoint and pray for her healing once said, “Well, I know God is able to heal me,

but I don't know whether it is His will."

I read to her, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities" (Ps. 103:2-3) and I stopped there.

"Do you believe that? Do you believe it is HIS WILL to forgive all your sins?"

"Oh, yes," she replied.

"But WHY do you believe it?" I asked.

"Because it says so in the Bible," she answered.

"Then do you think God lied in the other half of that verse, which says, 'who healeth all thy diseases'?"

How about YOU? Do YOU who read this believe God? **Do you have to struggle and try to work up faith to believe God MEANS what He says, and will DO what He says?**

"Yes," some will answer, "but what about times when people called the elders of the Church, who anointed and prayed for healing, and they were not healed?"

But HOW DO YOU KNOW they were not healed? Well, they reply, because the pain was still there. They could still FEEL it. They could SEE that they were not healed.

But, God answers, **"We walk by FAITH, not by sight"** (II Cor. 5:7). **What one sees or feels has nothing to do with it. Jesus said, "According to your FAITH be it unto you"** (Matt. 9:29).

A trying experience

I had to learn this, personally, by a trying experience. I was visiting my parents' home. In the evening my father was suddenly stricken. Another minister was with me. We anointed and prayed for him. He did not improve immediately so we continued to pray. We prayed without ceasing all night.

I prayed in positive faith. I KNEW God would heal my father. Occasionally I opened the Bible, and each time I opened it to a scripture that seemed to imply God heard and he would be healed. My faith was actually strengthened through the night. Yet at 9:40 next morning my father died.

It was a traumatic shock and blow

to my faith. For a while I simply couldn't understand it! I knew God had PROMISED. I had obeyed His command in James 5:14 in implicit FAITH. I had not doubted. I prayed for understanding. I turned to the "faith chapter" of the Bible — Hebrews 11.

There I was reminded again, **"Faith is the . . . evidence of things NOT SEEN"** (verse 1). I could SEE that my father was not healed. But that was not the evidence proving whether he was healed. **FAITH is the evidence — the PROOF — that God's Word is good.**

Then, reading on, I saw again that God had made the PROMISES on which our salvation and eternal life depend to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The only PROOF we have of eternal life is GOD'S PROMISES according to His conditions.

But Abraham, Isaac and Jacob all died IN FAITH, not (yet) having received the promises. But verse 40 shows God's promises are SURE! They SHALL receive the promises *in the resurrection*.

There I saw the TRUTH! God opened my eyes to see. God did not tell Abraham HOW or WHEN He would fulfill His promises. **He will do it HOW and WHEN He wills, not when we will.** My father will have the healing I prayed for in the resurrection. That will be the next split second of his consciousness.

God keeps His promises

This fact — that God keeps His promises HIS WAY and in HIS TIME — I realize, means a great test of faith to our people today. But faith is RELYING ON GOD'S WORD!

Let me repeat that: **FAITH IS RELYING ON GOD'S WORD!**

Sometimes the things God expects of us by FAITH seem IMPOSSIBLE! Look at Abraham's case. Abraham had wanted a son. He had yielded to temptation, and sired an illegitimate son by his wife's handmaid, Hagar. He wanted God's promises to Abraham to be carried out through Ishmael, Hagar's son.

But God refused. God keeps His promises GOD'S way. God's way required a miracle. When Abraham was 99 years old and his wife Sarah

was 90, God caused the barren Sarah at last to have a son. All God's promises had to be fulfilled through this son Isaac.

Then God put Abraham's FAITH in God's word to a severe TEST. God told Abraham to offer up Isaac as a sacrifice. Now most people would have used human reason. If Isaac were killed as a sacrifice, how could God keep His promises through a dead son? There was NO WAY except if God performed a MIRACLE to keep His word.

But, impossible as it must have seemed to Abraham, he RELIED ON GOD'S WORD! HE OBEYED! At the very last second, God caused a ram to be caught by its horns in the bushes behind Abraham, and God told Abraham to offer the ram as a burnt offering instead of his son.

WHAT A TEST OF FAITH!

Believe God's Word

Yet God expects you and me today to BELIEVE HIS WORD — TO RELY ON HIM to keep His promises! Jesus Christ was beaten with stripes terribly, suffering indescribable pain and agony, to pay the PENALTY of physical sin, so that you and I and our children may be HEALED. And by His stripes we are healed (I Pet. 2:24).

Jesus' suffering by being beaten with stripes was in vain unless God's Word is good — unless we are healed!

James 5:15 says **the prayer of FAITH shall save the sick, and the Lord WILL HEAL.**

Yes, there are conditions to God's promises. Jesus said, **"According to your FAITH be it unto you."** He said to a young woman, **"Thy FAITH hath made thee whole."** When you don't believe, you do two things: 1) You nullify His promise by not performing His condition to healing and 2) you make God a liar — you don't believe His Word!

There is another condition: "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (I John 3:22). You must be yielded to obedience to His commandments. And you must be doing what is pleasing in His sight — and

(Continued on page 29)

How Beautiful Are Your Feet?

Biblically speaking, it is important to find out!

By Clayton Steep

Feet. Some are calloused and gnarled. Some are corn- and bunion-prone. Some have crooked toes and ingrown toenails. Some are flat.

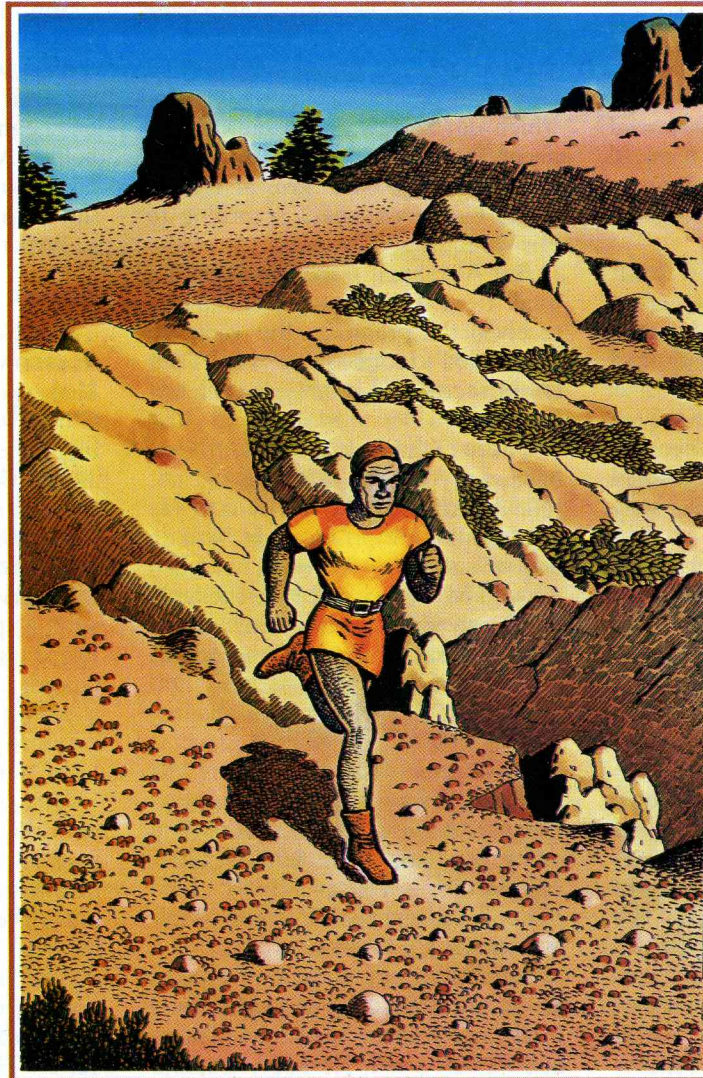
They have been called the ugliest part of the human body.

Yet when Isaiah wrote about feet, he stated that some are beautiful! "How beautiful," he exclaimed, "upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings" (Isa. 52:7).

Feet upon mountains? Beautiful feet at that? Whatever was Isaiah talking about?

To understand we must for a moment picture ourselves in the time Isaiah lived. News traveled slowly back then. There was no such thing as instant satellite communication. Television, radio, telephones — electronic marvels we so much take for granted — did not exist. They didn't even have the telegraph. Nor did they have newspapers, magazines, air mail and other such means for rapidly spreading news.

Instead, the most direct and swiftest way to send news was by personal



courier — a messenger who, mounted or on foot, carried the communicate to its destination. Up hill and down hill, over hot plains and dusty roads, through rain and snow — the news must get through. And get through it did, thanks to the fleet-footed messengers.

The news itself was not always

good, though. Sometimes the messengers had the distasteful task of delivering bad news. And various potentates were known to react to bad news by beheading the hapless messenger who brought it. A definite occupational hazard in those days.

On the other hand, when the news was good, it was especially thrilling to be the bearer of it, for "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country" (Prov. 25:25).

The receiving of good news is so exhilarating that Isaiah praised the determined, tired, soiled feet, running for all they are worth, carrying a message of good news over the rugged mountains. "How beautiful," he said, "upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good."

The specific good news Isaiah was referring to is that brought from the supreme God. Isaiah praised the feet of the messenger who "publisheth

Fleet-footed Ahimaaz ran to King David with the good news that David's forces had won a decisive battle (II Sam. 18).

salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" (Isa. 52:7). God rules! That is the best news there is. That is the Gospel.

The apostle Paul quoted Isaiah this way: "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (Rom. 10:15).

This sin-sick, war-weary, crime-crazed world desperately needs good news. Miserable, frustrated, suffering humanity needs to receive the incredibly wonderful message that the almighty, sovereign God rules and that His rule is good.

We in the Church of God have that message of good news to bring to the world!

While the Church as one body carries that message through its spokesman and apostle, Herbert W. Armstrong, the part in the Work each of us as individuals has may also be compared to runners carrying news. Thus each of us should periodically examine himself to see if he is enthusiastically fulfilling his part in the Work — to see if he (or she) is *running* with the news.

"Ponder the path of thy feet," the Bible tells us, "and let all thy ways be established" (Prov. 4:26). Let us do some pondering.

Road hazards

As we run with the news that has been committed to us, we must face some of the same problems encountered by the messengers of old: robbers, wild animals, distractions, fatigue, the elements.

There are other human beings who lie in wait to steal from us that which is most valuable: our salvation. Their chief weapon is persecution, although they have other weapons such as falsehoods, rumors, gossip, clever arguments and deceitful teachings. "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev. 3:11).

We must be careful not to be like some in the Church at Galatia. They listened to deceitful, seductive voices and got waylaid. The apostle Paul lamented: "You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth? This persuasion is not from him who called you" (Gal. 5:7-8, Revised Standard Version).

Jesus said His sheep do not listen to thieves and robbers (John 10:8).

So close your ears and keep running!

Not only do thieves lurk in the shadows, ready to pounce, but so do wild animals. "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Pet. 5:8).

What can we do to protect ourselves? Three things are mentioned by Peter in verses 8 and 9: "Be sober, be vigilant" ("Keep cool, keep awake" — Moffatt Version; "Be self-controlled and alert" — New International Version) and "resist [him] steadfast in the faith."

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (Jas. 4:7). This is a promise we should claim.

All along the route we travel, there are tempting distractions. Bright lights and the tinsel of the world beckon us to stop for a while and indulge ourselves. But we must not do so: "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away" (Prov. 4:14-15).

Don't get sidetracked; you have a message that must get through now. "Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. . . . Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil" (verses 25, 27).

Fatigue can be a problem. If our spiritual health is poor, we will not have the stamina to run the full distance. An adequate diet of God's Word and His Spirit is essential to avoid fatigue. A fatigued runner gets nowhere.

That's why we are admonished to "lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed" (Heb. 12:12-13). Spiritual fatigue is healed by drawing closer to God.

Like the washed-out roads, adverse weather and other elements many couriers encountered, we, too, come up against difficult obstacles. But God permits those obstacles to be there so we can grow stronger by overcoming them. We must not allow them to slow us down or stop us. We must keep on running! "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21).

By ourselves we would not know to

keep our feet on the path — how to find our way. "O Lord," Jeremiah exclaimed, "I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23).

No, it is just not "in" him. Without God we would be like all the rest of humanity whose "feet run to evil" (Prov. 1:16) and whose "feet stumble upon the dark mountains" (Jer. 13:16).

But we have a light. "Thy word," David declared, "is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps. 119:105). We need to be spending more time studying that Word. "Let thine heart retain my words," God says. "Keep my commandments, and live. . . . When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened [hampered]; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble" (Prov. 4:4, 12).

Carrying a message

The single most important reason for which each of us has been called into the Church today is to back up and support the Work of God as it bears to the world the good news of the coming Kingdom of God.

In Ephesians 6, the apostle Paul described the armor a Christian must wear. Notice the interesting way he makes a connection between a Christian's feet and the Gospel: We are to have our "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace" (verse 15).

We have been commissioned to carry a message. "Go ye into all the world," Jesus ordered, "and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Everything in our lives ought to revolve around that great commission.

Consider Mr. Armstrong. His feet have been bringing good news for some 50 years, starting on the back roads of rural Oregon. Today his feet go into king's palaces, presidential residences, governmental buildings, prime ministers' offices, before gatherings of hundreds and thousands. They carry him before radio and TV facilities and to his typewriter, bringing the Gospel God has sent. (The word *apostle* means "one who is sent.")

Our feet should run with the message, too. They should take us to our prayer closets where we can pray for

(Continued on page 29)



How to Develop Godly Patience

Real, godly patience is vitally important in overcoming the trials of this life and qualifying for God's Kingdom. Here's how to have this patience.

By Norman Shoaf

Patience, you tell yourself.

You were just cut off on the freeway by another driver, and you missed your turn. Your first urge was to blast your horn at him or call him some name. He was speeding anyway. Why couldn't he have just eased into the lane behind you?

But then you catch yourself, and

begin looking for the next exit.

You're in the supermarket. You just stopped in to pick up a couple of items — you're due somewhere and are already behind schedule. And wouldn't you know it? Only one check stand is open, and you're the fourth person in line.

You have several options. You can leave in disgust and come back later to get your groceries. You can find the store manager and, fuming, give

him a piece of your mind. Or you can calmly wait your turn and be cheerful about the whole thing.

Patience.

We all need to develop more patience to deal with problems in our everyday lives — disagreements with our mates, annoyances from our children, unfair treatment from employers and fellow workers, inconsiderate acts of our friends.

But, as Christians, we have an even

Illustration by Greg Sandilands

greater need to develop real godly patience, living, as we do, in the pulsating pressure cooker that is this end time. We are challenged to endure to the end, and to patiently wait for the return of Jesus Christ and the establishment on earth of the Kingdom of God.

Paul tells us, "But if we hope for that we see not [our birth into God's Family], then do we with patience wait for it" (Rom. 8:25).

So what exactly is true, effective, godly patience? And how can we develop more of it, to better deal with everyday trials and to endure until Christ's return?

Cheerful endurance

Hebrews 12:1 tells us to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Patience is one of the virtues Peter tells us to "add" to keep from falling away from the faith (II Pet. 1:5-10).

James writes that Christians should "count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (Jas. 1:2-4).

In all the verses referred to above, the word *patience* is translated from the Greek word *hupomone*. This Greek word means "cheerful or hopeful endurance, patience, patient continuance or waiting."

People with real patience bear trials calmly. They are steadfast in the face of adversity or strain. Patient people are not hasty or impetuous, but act with wisdom and discretion. The Bible gives many examples of people who were shining examples of patience. God's Word also records the failures of some others to exercise this godly trait.

Real patience — and the lack of it

The ancient Israelites' lack of godly patience caused them no end of troubles. They saw God's direct intervention to help them with miracle after miracle. Yet they became impatient and rebelled time and again rather than trust God for food, water, protection from enemies and proper leadership.

But notice why ancient Israel's example is recorded for us:

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).

By studying the examples in God's Word and using God's Spirit to help us avoid the mistakes recorded there, we can develop more godly patience.

The prophet Samuel had arranged to meet King Saul at Gilgal and offer sacrifices there before a battle with the Philistines. When the appointed time came and went and Samuel didn't appear, Saul began to worry.

Saul and the people with him grew more and more impatient and fearful, until Saul decided to offer the sacrifices himself, in direct contravention of God's command.

Immediately after Saul's sin, Samuel appeared (if Saul had only waited a while longer!). The prophet condemned the king's act, and informed Saul that God had rejected him from being king of Israel (I Sam. 13:7-14).

Jesus Christ told a parable about a servant who owed a great debt to a certain king (Matt. 18:23-25). When the servant begged for mercy, the king, in an act of patience and kindness, released the servant from the debt.

But then this same servant went out and cast into prison a man who owed him far less than he had owed the king. The punishment for his lack of patience?

"Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him" (verses 32-34).

Wait for the Lord

The servants of God throughout history have manifested this trait of godly patience.

Abraham patiently waited a quarter of a century for the son God promised him from his wife Sarah. Abraham's patience is one of the many reasons God considered Abraham His friend.

"For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise" (Heb. 6:13-15).

Remember the patriarch Job? God allowed Satan to utterly destroy everything Job had and then to rack his body with severe pain. Yet Job set a tremendous example of patience, which James later made a special point of referring to (Jas. 5:11).

King David, unlike Saul who preceded him, had great patience, which was linked with an abiding faith in God. David's psalms are filled with expressions of this attitude of patience:

"I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry" (Ps. 40:1).

"Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day. . . . Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee" (Ps. 25:5, 21).

"I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope" (Ps. 130:5).

"Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation" (Ps. 62:1).

The apostle Paul, in the service of God's Work, underwent hardships that we today can scarcely imagine (II Cor. 11:24-33). Yet he endured patiently, and exhorted others to do likewise:

"But we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Rom. 5:3-5).

"And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ" (II Thess. 3:5).

"Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Heb. 6:12).

The greatest example of patience was set by Jesus Christ, who, as an innocent Lamb, died a hideous death to make possible mankind's reconciliation to God: "For consider him that

endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Heb. 12:3).

Developing patience

Here, then, are several ways to develop godly patience.

• *Keep your eye on the overall goal.* All of us are forced to deal with trials and problems. When we're trying to reason with unconverted mates or striving to please unfair bosses or struggling to make financial ends meet, it's sometimes hard to keep our minds on our ultimate destiny — birth into God's Family and co-ulership, with Jesus Christ, of the universe.

But that's exactly what we must do — keep our minds on that great, overall goal. James wrote that Christians should focus on, and conduct their lives in expectation of, Christ's Second Coming and the Kingdom of God:

"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. . . . Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (Jas. 5:7-8).

The most important thing on God's mind right now is the restoration of His government to this earth and the eventual establishment of His Kingdom throughout the universe. And that has always been His goal. But consider that a thousand years to God is like a mere day (Ps. 90:4) — consider the great patience of God! We are to emulate that patience in constantly looking forward to God's Kingdom.

"For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry" (Hab. 2:3).

• *Think before you act.* There is an old saying that "fools rush in where angels fear to tread." A person who jumps to conclusions is likely to end up at the bottom of a cliff.

Your husband or wife made an unkind remark to you? Don't snap back with something you'll later be sorry you said. Rather, concentrate on glorifying God. You're sick and tired of standing in line at a church function or at the Feast of Tabernacles? Occupy your mind with something else! Don't dwell on your

consternation about the long line, or you'll end up saying or doing something that will set a wrong example of God's way of life.

• *Concentrate on giving.* Impatience is many times rooted in selfishness.

Paul said, "Be patient toward all men" (I Thess. 5:14) — the slow bank teller, the small child who can't understand an instruction, the rude gas station attendant, the person who drones on and on with the most boring story you ever heard.

Overlook the shortcomings of others (you may have a few of your own). Forget yourself and be concerned with their welfare. "The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit" (Eccl. 7:8).

Sincerely love the other person and look upon him as a future God — it will drastically change your perspective.

• *Talk out tensions.* Does a mate, a fellow employee or a friend have an annoying habit that is about to drive you up the wall? Well, if you simply cannot overlook it any longer, tell the person about it and talk out your feelings.

In almost every case, the other person will not have even realized his habit bothered you, and will make an effort to stop, if you approach him with tact, meekness and sincere concern.

Ask God to grant you favor in his eyes. Don't let the impatience and resentment build up inside you until you explode into rage or retaliate some way — you would certainly not be setting an example of godly self-control or patience then.

• *Rely on God for strength.* Our Father in heaven is the very God of patience, and He can help you have a mind like His (Rom. 15:5). When you think you're at the end of your rope — you just can't grin and bear it any longer — ask God for more of His Holy Spirit — His strength.

Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong has always glorified God as the source of his continued drive and perseverance, referring to God's promise in Isaiah 40:29-31:

"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they

that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

David wrote, "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord" (Ps. 27:14).

God can give you the patience you need to overcome.

An incredible future

If we do wait on God — if we practice godly patience and endure to the end of this age, an incredible future awaits us.

"For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God . . . and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies" (Rom. 8:19, 23, Revised Standard Version).

Even God's very creation sets an example of patience for us as it awaits the fulfillment of God's plan of reproducing Himself through us!

"For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him" (Isa. 64:4).

Patience is a vitally important commodity in the makeup of the future children of God. We must have godly patience if we are to rule with Jesus Christ!

"For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth" (Ps. 37:9).

Make every effort to build this trait of godly patience into your character — it is necessary if you intend to overcome the trials of this life and endure until Christ's coming.

"[God] will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath" (Rom. 2:6-8).

"For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise" (Heb. 10:36). □

Close-Up

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

By Robert C. Smith

World War I was being fought. The Model-T Ford was America's family car. The Boston Red Sox won the World Series. Herbert W. Armstrong, eight years away from being angered into a study of the Bible, maintained an office on the prestigious loop in Chicago, Ill. And Carl A. Smith went to work for the W.G. Arthur Hardware Co. in Orchard Park, N.Y.

The year was 1918, and 63 years have passed since.

Now, in 1981, World Wars I and II, the Korean conflict and the Vietnam war are all history. Model-T Fords may be found in museums, having disappeared from America's highways as anything except novelties. Sixty-three World Series winners have come and gone. Herbert W. Armstrong is the pastor general and apostle of God's Church. And Carl A. Smith is still working at the W.G. Arthur Hardware Co.!

Carl and Mae Smith, members of God's Church in Buffalo, N.Y., have remained active in both Church and community affairs from their farm, situated between Orchard Park and East Aurora, N.Y.

The rolling terrain of Meadowlawn Farm has belonged to the family since the Holland Land Co. began dispersing land several centuries ago.

Little did Mr. Smith realize as he began his part-time, summer-vacation job at the hardware store that he would eventually be serving the fourth generation of his original customers. Through a long Depression period, through the tenures of 13



Photo by Scott Smith

U.S. presidents and through the joys and traumas of a 55-year marriage that has so far produced six children, 21 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren, Mr. Smith and his wife as well have continued to serve.

Both born in 1903, the Smiths have lived through the great transition from the simple life of the turn of the century to the hustling, technologically advanced space age society of today. The fourth generation of the Arthur family still owns the store, which in the horse-and-buggy days was proudly advertised as "Western New York's Largest Suburban Hardware Store."

Mr. and Mrs. Smith became interested in the message of *The World Tomorrow* broadcast in 1960 through their son Bob (pastor of the Fort Worth, Tex., congregation) and

daughter-in-law Shirley. They were baptized in 1969.

The Buffalo congregation has a standing invitation to visit "The Farm," as the Smiths' home is nicknamed, and during the summer brethren can be found enjoying weekends there.

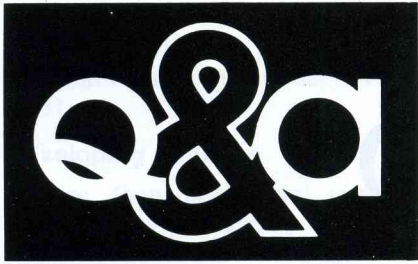
A man-made lake, which Mr. Smith excavated to provide extra protection against fires, teems with bass and other fish.

A Gay Nineties recreation room wafts one off to the atmosphere of another era. Visitors don various *chapeaux* — derbies, stovepipes or Western — and gather around an old, pedal-pumped player piano for joyous sing-alongs. The room contains a bar, myriad antiques and memorabilia and dozens of awards won by Mae Smith at county fairs. Outside, the clangs of a game of horseshoes can be heard.

Such activities are usually topped off with a tasty barbecue on the patio of this lovely old home, which was constructed in 1835.

Shortly after Carl Smith was hired for a "probationary period" at the hardware store, he approached William G. Arthur and apprehensively reminded him, "I'm hoping for a steady job." Little did either of them, on that day in 1918, expect that just 19 years before the dawn of a new century, this young man would still be faithfully reporting to work in that same little store.

Carl and Mae Smith have put the "seven laws of success" to the test, and have emerged winners in the truest sense. □



Why was King David not stoned for committing adultery with Bath-sheba?

The Bible leaves no doubt as to David's guilt. According to the law (Lev. 20:10), one who committed such a deed was worthy of death. But the wheels of justice seem to move slowly at times, and the apparent laxity with which "justice" was carried out in this case was not unique.

Historically, we see that the "administration of death" lost its teeth soon after the days of Moses. The people of Israel as a whole never did observe God's laws perfectly.

Nor were the transgressors always punished in a prescribed manner. The society in general simply winked at certain sins. David was not the first to commit adultery and get away with it for a time.

Another point to consider is that David, being the king, was the ultimate authority in the nation. Who would have dared to cast the first stone? Ultimately it was Nathan, a prophet of God, who confronted David with his sins.

But, we might ask, why didn't God strike David down immediately?

God in His infinite wisdom turned a bad situation into something good — for us all! He didn't take David's life, but neither did He let David get away with his sins (II Sam. 12:11-14). God exercised patience, knowing David's heart, and David ultimately repented.

David's heartfelt repentance serves as an inspiration and an example for all generations. Psalm 51 records David's prayer as he renewed his contact with God.

Yes, David sinned — as have all humans (Rom. 3:23). But unlike so many individuals, David's confession was heartrendingly sincere, his repentance total, and he humbly submitted to the punishment God did mete out.

David received forgiveness. And in

the resurrection he will be king over the 12 tribes of Israel.

Perhaps this whole affair was recorded to graphically illustrate the limitless mercy and patience of God, who is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Pet. 3:9).

I do not understand Matthew 24:40-41. What does it mean, "one shall be taken, and the other left"? Taken where?

These scriptures must be read in context. In Matthew 24, Christ is telling His disciples about His return to this earth. Verses 40-41 state: "Then [at the time of His return] shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left."

Christ is showing that at His return there is to be a separation made between those who have and those who have not qualified to enter God's Kingdom as spirit beings (I Cor. 15:50-53).

While great tribulation is prophesied, it is evident that many people will be going about their personal business, seeking their own satisfaction (Matt. 24:37-39). Only those who are yielded to God and obeying His instructions will know that Christ's return is imminent (Luke 21:34-36).

When the saints rise to meet Christ in the air (I Thess. 4:13-17), they will have been changed into spirit beings (I Cor. 15:52-53). They will then descend with Christ to the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:4) where they will begin to rule the entire world with Him (Rev. 5:9-10).

Those who are not "taken" and made immortal will live on into the Millennium as physical human beings, awaiting their "change" at a later time.

Our free reprint, "The Secret Rapture," shows that Matthew 24:40-41 and Luke 17:34-36 do not refer to a secret rapture as some teach. Why not write for this reprint as well as our free book, *Tomorrow . . . What It Will Be Like?*

In John 9:3, Jesus told His disciples that the blindness of a particular man resulted from neither his sins nor the sins of his par-

ents. Was this man predestined to be blind from birth?

Let the Bible itself give us the answer. The man was blind from birth so that "the works of God should be made manifest in him" (verse 3).

Notice verse 4. Jesus said, "I must work the works of him that sent me." God provided certain works for Jesus to fulfill in the sight of the people.

Yes, this man was predestined to be blind from birth. This was a carefully planned situation created by God to make known to the world that Jesus Christ was His Son!

This was one of Christ's greatest miracles. Verse 32 tells us that "Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind."

The Jews knew that no man could perform such a miracle without the help of God. Upon recognizing this, the Jews knew that Jesus was sent from the Father. Yet they denied Him, leaving themselves without excuse.

Would you explain the meaning of Revelation 14:11, "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever . . . "?

Notice that verse 8 places the time in the future, for "Babylon," the great religious and political system that will dominate the world for a short period, has not yet fallen.

Verses 9 and 10 state: "If any man worship the beast [the coming Babylonish system] and his image, and receive his mark . . . he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone . . . in the presence of the Lamb [that is, after Christ's Second Coming]." There is no hell fire burning today. Those who have a part in this church-state system of "Babylon" receive this frightful punishment for being part of that system that has fallen under God's wrath!

This passage does not mean these individuals are tormented forever in an ever-burning hell. Verse 11 says, "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." It does not say the fire burns forever, but that the smoke continues to ascend. This happens when a fire burns out — its smoke is still in the air.

Since the soul is not immortal, would you explain the appearing

of Samuel to Saul after Samuel's death?

Notice the account. Saul inquired of God about the outcome of the battle against the Philistines. But God gave him no answer, neither by any dream nor by a prophet (I Sam. 28:6).

Saul then went to the witch at Endor — a woman who had contact with familiar spirits or demons! "Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel" (verse 11). Saul wanted to speak to Samuel to find out how the battle the next day would go for him. He was desperate and frightened.

So the woman complied with Saul's request. "And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice. . . . And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw a god-like being coming up out of the earth" (verses 12-13, Jewish translation).

The account continues in verse 14, where Saul asked the woman: "What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived [or thought] that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself."

When Saul asked the woman what she saw, she used these words: "a god-like being," "an old man," "he is covered with a mantle."

Not one word that it was Samuel!

What did the witch see? She saw an apparition and thought it was Samuel.

The Bible reveals that Satan is the prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2:2). Satan is the god of this world and can transform himself into an angel of light (II Cor. 4:4, 11:14). Satan and his demons have the power to produce visions and to appear in human or animal forms.

The next question in I Samuel 28 arises over verse 15: "And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?" Why does the account read as though Samuel were speaking to Saul?

It is merely a matter of what Saul wanted to see and hear. Demons enjoy fooling people. This demon impersonating Samuel apparently knew the outcome of the battle. He said that Saul would die the following

day and his army would be beaten by the Philistines.

We read in Genesis 3:4 that Satan deceived Eve: "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die." But we know this was not a serpent speaking, but Satan the devil himself. Yet the account says, "the serpent said."

In like manner I Samuel 28 records "Samuel" speaking, although it was actually a demon speaking through what looked like a human. Thus, it was a demon who appeared to the witch of Endor and Saul.

This scripture in no way contradicts the multitude of clear scriptures proving that the soul is not immortal. For an explanation of these scriptures, write for the free reprint entitled "What Is Man?"

Why are Matthew, Mark, Luke and John called "the four gospels"?

The first four books of the New Testament are set apart from the other 62 books of the Bible in that they are each biographies of Jesus. They deal directly with His birth, life, death, resurrection and the message or announcement He brought about the Kingdom of God.

The word *gospel* comes from the Anglo-Saxon *godspel*, which means "good tidings" or "good news." The word in the original Greek, the language in which the New Testament was written, is *euaggelion*, from which, through the Latin *evangelium*, comes our word *evangel* and its derivatives. It means "bearing or bringing good news." An *evangelist* is one who brings good news about the coming Kingdom of God.

That which Jesus Himself spoke — the message He brought from God the Father — was and is good news. It is, in our language today, the Gospel. Since Matthew, Mark, Luke and John each contain an account of what Jesus spoke, these books collectively are often referred to as "the four gospels."

Does Malachi 4:5-6 mean that the prophet Elijah will reappear on earth before Christ's Second Coming?

Malachi 4:5-6 is a dual prophecy, having two fulfillments. It was first fulfilled by John the Baptist, who

prepared the way for Christ's first coming.

In Luke 1:17 we read: "And he [John the Baptist] shall go before him [Christ] in the spirit and power of Elias [Elijah], to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

The prophecy does not mean that Elijah will be resurrected before Christ returns. Rather it is speaking of someone who has the same spiritual calling and office as the prophet Elijah, the man of God who witnessed with power to a rebellious nation and commanded them to obey God ("if the Lord be God, follow him" — I Kings 18:21).

When John the Baptist began preaching repentance and baptizing in the wilderness, the priests and Levites came from Jerusalem to ask if he was the prophesied "Elijah." John said no (John 1:19-23).

But Jesus said that John was indeed the prophesied "Elijah" of that day (Matt. 11:7-15). John was the "Elijah" who came to restore all things in preparation for Christ's ministry (Matt. 17:10-13).

But the second stage of this prophecy was to be fulfilled in the last days — "before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." This is speaking of our time now.

At the close of this present evil age, another "Elijah" is to thunder a warning message to disobedient Israel and prepare a people for Christ's glorious return to reestablish God's government on earth.

Yes, just before the end of this present evil world the Gospel of the Kingdom must be preached as a witness to all the world (Matt. 24:14). An "open door" of the mass media has been provided (Rev. 3:8).

Jesus said that only those who had "ears to hear" — who were tuned in to God's truth — would recognize the second "Elijah," John the Baptist (Matt. 11:14-15). Likewise, only those who are obedient to God and led by His Spirit will recognize the end-time "Elijah."

Those who do, and who are heeding the message, will be protected by God when the world erupts in the flames of the Great Tribulation (Rev. 3:10). □

How to Cope as a Single Parent

Proper child rearing is a serious challenge even with both father and mother present. But single parents face even more difficulties. Here are practical suggestions for single parents.

By Richard Rice

Rearing a child is never easy, but for one person to function as both mother and father is the toughest job of all.

Yet it is increasingly common today for a parent to find himself or herself in this double role.

Already there are nearly six million single-parent households, more than half a million headed by a father, the rest by a mother. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that more than 13 percent of all U.S. families are now headed by women. The number of families headed by women has increased more than 73 percent since 1960.

God's Church also has a growing number of single-parent households. Besides the age-old tragedy of one parent dying, many parents come into the Church divorced or separated from their mates, having to rear their children alone.

Those who have enjoyed the loving companionship of marriage understandably find readjustment to single life difficult. Loneliness and frustration often creep in. The responsibilities of shouldering the roles of both mother and father can be physically and emotionally draining.

Consequently, many parents in this situation find themselves overworked, tired and, as a result, more easily upset and irritable. Others may still be recovering from the trauma of

a divorce or the death of a mate.

Children also suffer in a single-parent home. They may have difficulty being fully understood by a parent of the opposite sex. For example, a son may find his mother failing to appreciate his interests. Similarly, a daughter may learn that her father has difficulty understanding some of her feminine needs.

The problem of adjusting can be just as traumatic for a child having a single parent of the same sex, since the care of both parents is necessary to completely fulfill the emotional needs of the child.

Often children with only one parent have more difficulty at school. A study showed that single-parent children require far more help and attention from school than they receive.

To become self-supporting as a single parent can also be a major struggle. Few single parents escape the financial difficulties inherent in bringing up children alone.

Some women may have been so dependent on their former husbands that they lack the right kind of confidence to make decisions for themselves and their families. Often those with older children need to go out and find employment. And after many years at home, they may be out of touch with the work environment or their skills may be rusty or outdated.

Here are some practical suggestions to help you as a single parent boldly face your responsibilities.

These suggestions have worked for other Church members who found themselves in this situation.

Look to God

Being a single parent can be like living without an arm or leg. Succeeding in such a situation is never going to be easy.

Therefore, realize that you have to rely and lean on God as never before. Even with the increased demands on your time and energy, make sure you take sufficient time for personal prayer and Bible study. Schedule your time wisely and keep first things first. If necessary, get up earlier so you can devote adequate time to these priorities.

God promises to supply all our needs, including those of single parents, and will not allow us to experience trials greater than we can bear (Phil. 4:19, I Cor. 10:13).

As a single parent, you can claim many special promises God makes in His Word. For example, Psalm 146:9 says that "The Lord . . . relieveth the fatherless and widow." Here is a promise that God will relieve the weight of any burdens single parenting may bring, whether physical, emotional, social or spiritual.

Psalm 68:5 (Revised Standard Version) describes God as the "Father of the fatherless" and also as a protector of widows. You can therefore have extra confidence when appearing before God's throne with your heartfelt prayers.

God is specially concerned for children whose parents are single. God promises to help the fatherless (Ps. 10:14) and to plead their cause (Prov. 23:10-11).

A Church member who had been a single parent for 17 years related: "No matter what trauma and suffering one has gone through, and for how long, God always blesses both the mother and children in the end. He does not forget the suffering and obedience to His laws. . . . The only way is to rely on God, who always takes care of things, even the minute details."

Put God and His way above everything else in your life, then trust Him to provide for and guide you in every situation. By learning to depend on God and asking Him for special help, you will be able to face your problems squarely. God will always supply the need, sometimes in totally unexpected ways.

We are God's workmanship

Sometimes we forget that God is the Potter and we are the clay (Isa. 64:8, Rom. 9:21). If we can always remember the promise of Romans 8:28 — that all things work together for good (including single parenthood) to those who love God — none of us need be overcome by excessive grief or allow ourselves to slip into self-pity and depression.

It can also be of immense encouragement to realize that there are others who are experiencing trials similar to yours. Spend time in positive fellowship with others in your situation, uplifting and encouraging one another.

Single parenthood is not an easy road to trek. Yet Christ has promised to help bear our burdens (Matt. 11:28-30). Jeremiah was inspired to write, "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?" (Jer. 32:27). In Philippians 4:13, Paul wrote, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

With the help and strength of God, you can accept the challenges of your situation, no matter how difficult they may seem. You must, therefore, cultivate a positive attitude toward your circumstances and make a bold commitment to face your problems with God's help.

Often single parents are not aware of the void that exists in their lives until they need their mates. But the realization eventually hits home, especially when problems arise. Career decisions, discipline problems, emotional stress and neighbor difficulties, to name a few, can quickly swell out of proportion without wise counsel.

Seek abundant counsel

In order to continue growing personally, single parents need sound counsel and advice, just as anyone else does (Prov. 11:14, 24:6). The value of guidance is priceless. Some try to go it alone and cause themselves unnecessary hardship.

God has set His ministers over the congregations to help brethren in His Church (Heb. 13:17, II Cor. 1:24). Seek out and consult with the ministry when problems get tough and help is needed. Also teach your children to seek wise counsel before making major decisions.

influenced by the good example of their children.

Where possible, don't overlook counsel from your own family. Family members can know you better than anyone else, and may be able to help in a particular situation. Quite often single parents who learn to successfully cope with their problems do so by keeping in touch with their own family and friends.

Chat with close friends who will simply lend an ear without forcing their advice or opinions on you. Occasionally difficulties can be resolved by simply airing your feelings. This enables you to step outside a situation and thus view it more clearly. Often, the solution then becomes obvious.

Organize your life

Life sometimes may seem hopeless and bewildering for single parents. They are pulled in a dozen directions, all at the same time, with many roles to fulfill — homemaker, breadwinner, bookkeeper, nurse. By organiz-



In addition, seek the advice of others who may be able to help with specific problems. If you are experiencing discipline problems, observe families in the Church whose child-rearing practices are producing good fruit, and then ask them for help and suggestions. If you make friends with these members, your children can be

ing, you will be more effective in fulfilling all your roles.

If you have not already done so, begin to set realistic goals in your life — and teach your children to do the same. Don't allow each day to just happen, without experiencing any progress or growth.

Make a daily list of things you

Photo by Warren Watson

need to accomplish and set priorities. But be flexible — never allow yourself to become obsessed with a schedule that's impossible to complete. Your schedule is only a guide to help you be more organized.

Have a calendar where the activities of every person in the family can be noted. This gives the family direction, goals and structure. You will be more in control and life will not tend to rush along, thus carrying you and your family wherever it will.

Create and maintain an efficient filing system for important papers, letters, bills and other documents.

Let the children take an active part in domestic duties such as cooking, cleaning or laundry. This will help them feel needed and useful, and they will learn responsibility. In addition, you will be able to devote more energy to other areas.

Don't let clutter collect around the house. Often this happens because the house is too small to store all the family belongings. Give away, sell or throw out what is not needed. Have a place for everything. Put things away when you're finished with them, and teach your children to do the same.

Build a close family

One of the best ways to offset the handicaps of a single-parent family is by building closeness and teamwork. Spending time with the children is the most essential, though perhaps the most difficult, task of a single parent.

Empathize with your children. The lack of one parent and the subsequent feelings of rejection and insecurity can make them crave the single parent's attention more than they normally would. A strongly united family enables each family member to give and receive the emotional and moral support needed. When one is down, the others will be able to provide strength and encouragement.

It is imperative for single-parent families to share regular meals together. Meal settings provide security, time for communication and unity. This is also an ideal time for sharing thoughts, feelings, ideas, dreams and concerns.

Be open and honest with your children, and allow them the freedom to be open with you. Let your children share with you the things that inter-

est them, be it science, homemaking or sports. Guide them to align their interests with God's law.

Always set an example of care, concern and thoughtfulness. This will further build a warm, happy home for your children, providing them with needed support.

Try to avert school problems by taking time to help with your children's studies. Also, take a personal interest in school activities.

Set aside one or two evenings each week to spend as a family. Plan these evenings in advance, perhaps including a special dessert, so that everyone will be home. Often anticipation is half the fun.

The Sabbath can be ideal for family Bible study. During the week, when opportunities arise, teach your children about God, pointing out blessings your family receives or sharing how God helps each family member that day.

Sundays can also be spent as family time. Take a drive in the country, go on a hike, spend a few hours at the beach, visit a museum or have lunch in a park. Other Sundays can be spent working together around the home, shopping, preparing for the next week or simply relaxing together. These activities need not consume the whole day, only a few hours of it, so that personal goals can also be accomplished.

Obtain input from your children on what they would like to do, and ask their opinions on suggested activities. Try to insure that whatever you plan will be enjoyed by the whole family.

Fellowship with brethren

Besides spending time as a family, include other Church members and their children in your activities. Invite brethren over for a meal, or have a potluck dinner at your home after Sabbath services. Invite both single people and families. This will not only help you and your children build friendships but also provide examples of the father or mother image for your children to imitate.

Encourage your children to participate in Church activities such as YOU, team sports or SEP. If you are a mother, try to insure that your children have the opportunity to interact with some of the men in the Church

who are strong fatherly figures.

Whenever possible, volunteer to help in Church activities. If your children are old enough, they can be involved in this kind of service as well. As you help and think of others, your own problems will seem less difficult and severe.

A word of caution is needed to the single parent who dates with the hope of remarrying. A delicate balance is involved here. Any decision involving a new mate needs to be carefully considered both from your vantage point as well as that of your children — their input, feelings and intuitions are important. Children should play a more decisive role than single parents like to admit. A prospective mate must be genuinely interested in both the parent and the children.

Counsel with the ministers as well as family and friends. Do not marry out of a sense of necessity. Your children do need a second parent, but that parent must be the right one.

Don't be weary in well doing

How can we as members better serve those who are single parents? In what ways can we follow the example of Job and cause "the widow's heart to sing for joy" (Job 29:13)?

Here are some suggestions for brethren in God's Church:

Show the single parents in God's Church that you really are concerned for them. Make it a point to get acquainted with them and to fellowship at Church and Bible study. Invite them to your home for an evening meal and games with you and your children. Offer to babysit on occasion when there is a singles' activity in your church area.

Befriend the children of single parents — invite them to share in the activities you plan for your own children such as camping, fishing and hunting. Offer rides to young mothers who may have difficulty driving to and from services because of the ages of their children.

God promises blessings to those who remember to help and serve the fatherless and widows: "Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy" (verses 12-13). □

Why Aren't You Closer to God?

What prevents you from enjoying a deep, full, close relationship with your Father in heaven?

You need to know how to draw closer to God.

By Bernie Schnippert

"At 8:13 Friday morning, members of Philadelphia's 'Friday the 13th Club' will walk under a ladder, eat a breakfast of 13 items, break mirrors, spill salt, open umbrellas, joke about black cats and light three cigarettes on one match. The ceremony will wrap up at 10:13 a.m."

That statement is from an Associated Press news release describing how one group of people feels about common superstitions. These people poke fun at them, as well they should. But not everyone shares their levity.

It's a pity, but some people believe life is based on luck. They feel that they've come to whatever station in life they have, or to whatever rung of the ladder they are on, because of forces that are totally outside their control.

They feel that they are merely corks floating on the waves of the sea of life, tossed hither and yon by overpowering forces they neither understand nor can face.

Some people exhibit this fatalistic view of life openly. They carry rabbits' feet or four-leafed clovers. They refuse to step on cracks for fear they

will "break their mother's back," or they cross the street so black cats won't saunter in front of them.

Other people are superstitious about religion. They carry medals of "saints," pray with relics clutched to their bosoms or carry prayers in little boxes around their necks or strapped to their arms or foreheads.

Even more people, though they may not believe in religious superstitions or in such charms as rabbits' feet, nonetheless, deep within themselves, feel trapped by the circumstances of this world. They feel that their lives are out of control. And, sadly, their lives probably are.

But not because they have to be.

Trapped by circumstances?

Although this type of erroneous thinking affects every area of a person's life, it does the most damage to one's spiritual growth.

Right in God's Church we have members who believe that they could never be really, truly close to their Creator God, for a broad number of irrational reasons.

They feel, for example, that they are from the wrong type of background. Their parents were not religious, so how could they ever be? They feel they are from the wrong part of the country, have the wrong heredity, that the wrong teachers taught them in high school or that

their bosses are standing in their way.

A great many people feel that they would be better Christians if only their bosses, their wives, their children, their brethren or even their minister would be different!

Other people say that they are too young to be close to God, or that they're too old. Some say they have too much of this world's education, while others feel they don't have enough. And, finally, some blame the Church's government. If only the Church's government was different, then their relationship with their God would be better.

Hogwash!

Your mother, father, boss, teacher, age, education or the Church's government do not determine how close your relationship is with God. **The only person who affects how close you are to God is you.**

Free moral agency

What about you? Do you feel your life is under your control? Or do you feel that you're the victim of outside forces that prohibit you from having a close, satisfying, deeply personal and constantly growing relationship with your God?

If you feel that way — if you feel that you could never be a Moses, an Aaron or a David because of somebody or something beyond your con-

trol — then you need to discover one of the most basic lessons of the Bible.

That lesson is this: You are a free moral agent. **Your spiritual life is under your control. You can be as close to God as any person has or will ever be.**

But be careful! This is not to say that you will have the same job or role or calling on earth now as Moses or Aaron or Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong. These men all were called to specific jobs, to positions of authority in the past and now.

But you *can* be as close to God as any man or woman has ever been, if you really want to be — if you do what these spiritually successful people have done in their lives. In fact, Mr. Armstrong writes each article and does each broadcast in the hope that you will do just that — follow the principles of the Bible and grow spiritually strong and close to God.

Not a “spiritual winner”?

So ask yourself this question: “Why do I feel that I cannot be a spiritual winner?”

Perhaps you feel you can’t win spiritually because you are not a physical winner in this life. But notice I Corinthians 1:27-28. These verses describe the type of people God calls — they describe *us*:

“But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen.”

We tend to look upon ourselves as physically inferior persons — that is, persons not highly successful in material ways in this world — and therefore conclude that we can amount to nothing spiritually. We “compare ourselves with some that commend themselves” (II Cor. 10:12) and come up losers in our own minds. We then conclude we cannot be spiritual winners.

However, God says the exact opposite. James tells us that God has chosen “the poor of this world rich in faith” to be “heirs of the kingdom” (Jas. 2:5).

God condemns those who look

upon the outward appearance and become respecters of persons because of their material possessions or status (verses 1-4).

God rather promises us that He will look upon our hearts even as He did when He picked humble David to be king over Israel instead of his more physically appealing brothers (I Sam. 16:6-7).

Another reason we may decide we can’t be spiritual winners is because hiding behind circumstances “beyond our control” gives us an excuse for not living up to our poten-

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tial. It takes the responsibility off of us.

But this excuse is not new. The first humans used the same technique in the Garden of Eden.

When God confronted Adam with his sin of eating the forbidden fruit, Adam, instead of admitting that as a free moral agent he was responsible for his own act, immediately put the blame on Eve, who in turn put the blame on the serpent (Gen. 3:8-13). The first human beings were telling God that they were “victims” — that other people or circumstances were standing in the way of their relationship with Him.

God explains in dramatic and

powerful language His feelings about the excuse that you and I are victims of the unrighteousness of others:

“The word of the Lord came unto me again, saying, What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge?” (Ezek. 18:1-2).

We say the same thing today. We say, in effect, that relatives, our bosses or somebody or something else is responsible for our not praying enough or studying enough or serving enough in the Church. But God condemns such an attitude.

“As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die” (verses 3-4).

In other words, God holds each person responsible for his own actions. Blaming your boss or your Aunt Mary just doesn’t impress God.

Gain control of your life

But there is a way to gain control of your spiritual life! There is a way to make sure that you reach your spiritual potential.

First, quit blaming others. Realize that God gave you free moral agency, and nothing can take it from you. Your age, your education or lack of it, your job, your wife, your husband, your children, your boss or your minister cannot stand in your way.

You alone determine how much you pray. You alone determine how much time you spend in Bible study, how much you fast, how much you meditate and what good works you do.

Second, since God commands you to obey Him, realize that He will give you the ability to do just that if you truly want to.

Deuteronomy 30:19 says: “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.”

How could God command you to “choose life” if He knew that circum-

stances would make it impossible for you to do so? The decision is truly up to you.

Next, realize that God does not just command you to seek His way, but commands you to *run* in the direction of righteousness. Many people meander along the spiritual road, blaming each person they come in contact with or each unfortunate circumstance that arises in their lives, picturing these obstacles as insurmountable boulders blocking their way.

But God tells us plainly that, once He has called us, His truth is right before us and can be acquired if we will only seek it.

"For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?"

"Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it" (verses 11-14).

Seek God's way

Yes, in spite of the fact that men try to picture God's way as impossible to follow, the apostle Paul says plainly that we "should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:27).

And remember this: **Once God has called you, the rest is in your hands.** Yes, God must take the first step. We do not come to God because of some goodness or desire that we may have on our own. We must be called (John 6:44).

But once we are called by God, it is up to us.

Remember the story of the parable of the pounds. A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. He delivered to his citizens money and hoped that they would trade with it to gain more for themselves and him. When he returned, he took account of his servants, "that he might know

how much every man had gained by trading" (Luke 19:12-15).

The first man gained 10 pounds, and the second one five. But the third, who was fearful and made excuses, gained nothing for himself or his master. As a result the Lord was wroth and took from him even what he had.

The lesson for us is clear, if we will only hear it and heed. We are free moral agents. **We can draw close to God if we truly want to. No excuse will justify our doing otherwise.** God did not accept the excuse of the

Yes, in spite of the fact that men try to picture God's way as impossible to follow, the apostle Paul says plainly that we "should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:27). . . . once we are called by God, it is up to us.

nobleman's fearful servant, and He will not accept ours, either.

What's your excuse?

So what's your reason? What's your excuse for not being closer to God?

Are you "too young"? Then read the story of the child Samuel in I Samuel 2, especially verse 26: "And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favor both with the Lord, and also with men." No, being too young is not a good excuse.

Are you "too old"? Then read of the prophetess Anna, who, though she was "of a great age," served God diligently (Luke 2:36-38).

Are you from a rough-and-tumble

background, having spent many years using bad or foul language? Then you are in good company, for Isaiah also declared himself "a man of unclean lips" who dwelt "in the midst of a people of unclean lips" (Isa. 6:5). God used him, and you can be just as close to God as he was.

Are you too uneducated? Then take a place beside the prophet Jeremiah, who felt himself so inexperienced and untrained that he called himself "a child" in learning (Jer. 1:6).

Are you a poor speaker? Then sit beside God's powerful servant, Moses, who declared, "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue" (Ex. 4:10).

Instead of relying on these or other excuses, remember Paul's admonition that nothing can separate us from God: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Rom. 8:35).

No, these things cannot separate us from Christ. And neither can your mother-in-law, your parents, your children, your boss, your education, your age, your IQ, your height, your previous religion or your looks.

The way you can get close to God is the same way that David or Moses or the prophets did or Mr. Armstrong does. **You must pray. You must study your Bible and fast. You must meditate, obey God and do good works. If you do these things, you will draw close to God.** Nothing or no one can keep you from it. God promises that they who "hunger and thirst after righteousness . . . shall be filled" (Matt. 5:6).

God is merciful and loving. He wants us to be close to Him.

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. **Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart"** (Jer. 29:11-13).

Nothing can separate you from God. Nothing but you.

What's your excuse? □

STORIES FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

Chapter 7

Multitudes Follow Jesus

By Shirley King Johnson

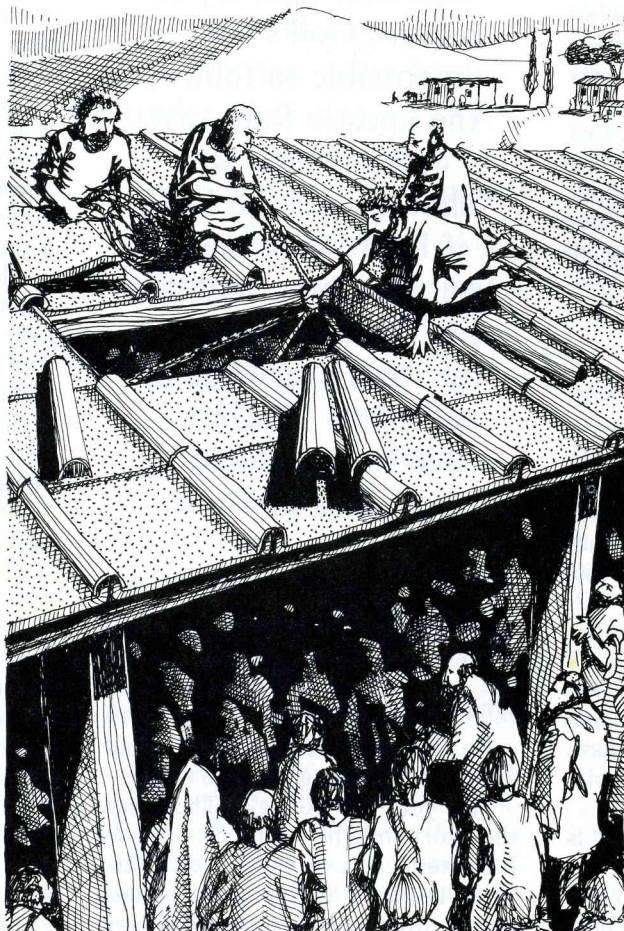
It was the weekly Sabbath, and the disciples accompanied Jesus to Capernaum's synagogue (Mark 1:21). As usual, Jesus was asked to read from the sacred scrolls and to teach. He stepped to the raised platform near the center and, taking a chair, accepted a scroll. When He was finished reading He explained the meaning of the scriptures with words that carried unmistakable authority.

A demon cast out

As the service came to a conclusion, a demon-possessed man lurched down the aisle and addressed Jesus.

"What business have you coming here?" he challenged. "I know who you are, Jesus of Nazareth." The demon in the man gave a little scream. "You eternal One, have you come to destroy us?"

Jesus looked into the wild eyes. "Silence!



Come out of him" (verse 25).

A convulsion tore the man's body and the man fell to the floor. As the demon left its victim, it made a wailing sound through the human lips. But as the sound faded away, the man's contortions stopped and he sat up, alert and in his right mind. Relatives gathered about him, thanking God for his deliverance. Services were over for the day.

Peter's mother-in-law healed

As they left the synagogue, Andrew and Peter asked Jesus, James and John to dine with them in Peter's

home. They accepted the invitation.

When they arrived Peter found his wife's mother lying on a pallet in a corner of the back room, running a high fever. Though she was

Frustrated by the crowd at Jesus' home, four men removed part of the roof and lowered a paralytic for Jesus to heal.

covered with a heavy shawl, she shivered with a chill.

Peter asked Jesus to step over to her pallet. Jesus stood over the woman for a moment, waiting for the vacant eyes in the flushed face to see that He was present.

"Mother," Peter said softly, "there's someone here to see you."

She turned her head and her eyes moved to His face. She tried to lift a hand in greeting but it fell back to the shawl.

Bending down, Jesus took the hand in His, rebuked the fever and helped her to rise from the pallet (Mark 1:31, Luke 4:39, Matt. 8:15).

Pleased to find her strength had returned, Peter's mother-in-law thanked Jesus and went to help her amazed daughter set out food for the family and guests. After everyone talked for a while, they moved to a table and enjoyed a meal of stewed figs and stuffed fish.

After the sun set, a crowd of people began to gather at Peter's house. The multitude grew so large it seemed to represent the entire population of Capernaum. Word of Jesus' presence there had traveled quickly.

Far into the night the people came in a patient line and Jesus healed them all (Mark 1:32-34, Luke 4:40).

The Gospel taken to Galilee

The next day Jesus rose well before daybreak and walked to a deserted area outside Capernaum. Finding a secluded place among some boulders, He knelt to pray to His heavenly Father (Mark 1:35, Luke 4:42). He was soon sought out by His disciples and other followers. They asked Him to return to the seashore to heal and teach as He had done in the past. But He shook His head. There were many other people He had to reach.

Jesus began an extensive tour of all the villages of Galilee, preaching the good news in the synagogues (Matt. 4:23, Mark 1:39, Luke 4:44). The report of His miracles spread to adjoining areas and it became increasingly difficult for Him to move about. Curiosity seekers and followers came from Decapolis, beyond the Jordan River, from all of Galilee and from Jerusalem and Judea (Matt. 4:25).

Returning to His own house in Capernaum, Jesus was confronted with the usual throng of people who wanted to see and hear Him, or needed healings or demons cast out. As they filled His yard until there was room for no more, He saw that Pharisees and lawyers from Jerusalem were mingling with the crowd. He knew that they were watching to see if they could find evidence that might be used against Him.

Blind and sick persons were in the audience, but before He healed them, Jesus spoke about the Kingdom of God. As the afternoon wore on, four men removed part of the roofing and let down a paralytic friend on some bedding (Mark 2:3-4, Luke 5:18-19). The noise drew everyone's attention, and Jesus paused in His sermon to watch. When the men laid their burden at Jesus' feet, He recognized their faith and spoke to the sufferer. "My son, your sins are forgiven."

The Pharisees reacted to His words as He knew they would. Faces growing dark with hostility, they murmured among themselves: "That is blasphemy! The only One who has power to forgive sins is God."

Jesus turned to them. "Why do you think such thoughts? Which is easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven' or 'Rise and walk'? Please observe and you'll see that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins." He turned back to the paralytic. "Rise. Take your bed and go on home."

Finding strength surging through his body, the man clasped the hand that Jesus extended, arose and began to roll up his blanket. He laid it over his shoulder and the spectators made a path for him to leave. The crowd joined him in praising God as he, followed by those who had brought him, left for his own home.

Matthew is called

Later, after a long morning of preaching in a boat at the edge of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus dismissed the multitude and, motioning for the four disciples to follow Him, went for a stroll along the shoreline.

Once they were away from the crowds He slowed His pace and began to talk to them about their part in the Work. He explained that He was in the process of selecting a team of men who would learn to live under the laws of

His Father's government. He added that once they had learned that government's principles, they would in turn teach them to others.

They left the shoreline and turned toward the city streets. As they reached the office of the tax collector for the Roman emperor, Jesus stopped. "Please wait for me here. I won't be long." He crossed the street.

The disciples saw Him approach a man who sat on the steps of the office. The day was balmy after a season of rather blustery weather, and the tax collector was enjoying a short break from his tedious work of counting coins and entering figures on tax rolls. The disciples might have reacted as follows:

Giving a smothered exclamation, Peter turned to the others. "You don't suppose He's going to ask a tax collector to join us, do you?"

All three were staggered at Peter's suggestion. The Galileans looked upon the Jewish tax collectors with contempt. They were mere quislings for the Roman government.

"Come to think of it," John said thoughtfully, "I've seen that man at the edge of the crowds when Jesus was speaking. I remember that magnificent robe and the well-trimmed beard."

The three men stared more closely as John continued: "I'm sure that Jesus noticed he seems interested in the Gospel message. We'd better brace ourselves! Jesus just said, 'Follow me.' He's getting up. He's going inside to tell the others in the office that he's resigning" (Matt. 9:9, Mark 2:14, Luke 5:27-28).

"Or taking a leave of absence," James added hopefully. "Maybe he won't like traveling with us."

They waited and watched. The tax collector soon came out of the office smiling, and he walked at Jesus' side as they crossed the street to the waiting disciples.

Jesus introduced the tax collector. "Andrew, Peter, James and John, this is Matthew. He's one of us."

The disciples acknowledged the introduction as cordially as they could. There was a short silence.

Matthew's high spirits could not be daunted,

however, and he seemed not to notice the disciples' initial coolness. "This calls for a celebration," he said. "A banquet!"

Matthew gives a banquet

Matthew made preparations for an elaborate feast in his home. He invited friends and former colleagues to join him. "Jesus will be there. You'll hear about the coming Kingdom of God from His own lips!"

Matthew's happiness set the mood for the event and the banquet was enjoyed by the many assembled guests.

While the disciples conversed in the courtyard before Matthew's spacious home, they were approached by certain of the rabbis who had heard about the tax collector's banquet and had gathered to condemn it. "Your teacher is quite a vulgar fellow," a rabbi taunted Peter. "He eats and drinks with sinners. How do you explain that?" (Matt. 9:11, Mark 2:16).

"He is not vulgar," Peter defended. "He's a perfect gentleman. He's the most intelligent person I've ever met."

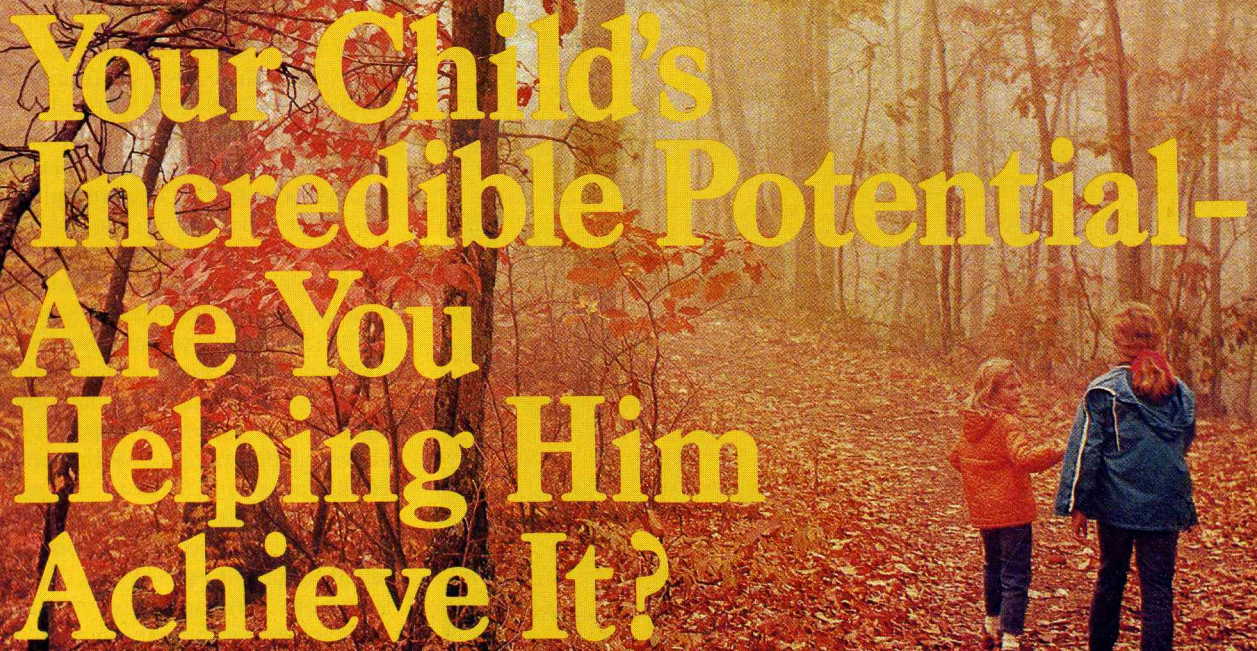
"It's the talk of Capernaum!" the rabbi went on. "These people He ate with are wicked men. Yet your Teacher enjoyed Himself with them — eating like a glutton, drinking like a sailor. Why, He laughed constantly and was the life of the party."

Beginning to see that jealousy was at the bottom of the ugly charges, Peter gave a short laugh. "He certainly enjoyed the party. Isn't that a pity?"

Other rabbis added words of condemnation and Peter denied all charges. Then he felt a hand on his elbow and turning, he saw that Jesus and Matthew had quietly joined them.

"Thank you for defending me, Peter, but it isn't necessary." Jesus turned to the rabbis. "Those who are well don't need a physician. I've come to call sinners to repentance, not the righteous." Moving on, He led His disciples up the street to His house. There they sat before a low-burning fire, talking.

The disciples had many questions to ask as Jesus discussed the Gospel and what it embodies. Daylight was breaking when they settled themselves to get a little sleep. □



Your Child's Incredible Potential— Are You Helping Him Achieve It?

Understanding the nature and purpose of human life is prerequisite to helping our children develop as God intends.

By Ellis LaRavia

Children are a special blessing. God says so, unequivocally.

“Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed” (Ps. 127:3-5).

All parents and potential parents should have this perspective toward children. Children are a wonderful gift from God — one way the Creator shows His love for man.

So why is it that children in today's society must many times be considered a curse?

Why is it that although youngsters from 10 to 17 account for only 16

percent of the U.S. population, they are responsible for nearly 50 percent of all serious crimes? Why is it that violent juvenile crimes have nearly tripled since 1960?

How can an innocent little baby born from the marital union of two people become part of a dreaded scourge?

More and more young people are on court probation, imprisoned or spending time in mental institutions, or are just rebellious and going the wrong way. Where have we, as parents, gone wrong?

Centuries ago the great Creator God who ordained marriage and the family prophesied family problems in this generation. He foresaw that disobedience to His government would turn families upside down. In Isaiah 3:12, He stated that children would be the oppressors. Offspring reflect

the fact that parents have failed to obey and serve God.

Parents' role

To begin to understand the role of the parent in child rearing is to first comprehend the purpose of human life. Why did God create human life, anyway? We must know the answer to this question before we can discern the proper role of the parent in child rearing.

In other human endeavors, we spend years preparing for the various professions or careers to earn a living. A person will spend four years or more to attain a bachelors degree at a college or university. This may extend to seven or eight years to become a doctor or lawyer.

Before the advent of mechanized farm equipment, a farmer would determine how well two oxen, horses or mules worked together as a team before hitching them to a plow. Even today, we test-drive cars to evaluate and compare them before selecting one to purchase.

But little time is spent in studying or determining our role as parents. In previous generations, children were to be “seen and not heard”; today,

Photos by David Dale Dickey



however, they are not only seen but heard also, and frequently to the embarrassment of the parents.

When God created the first man and woman, He blessed them and commanded them, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it" (Gen. 1:28).

God intended from the outset that His creation, made in His own likeness, should possess this beautiful earth and rule over it. It was His express desire for Adam and Eve to be the progenitors of offspring who would have a happy, abundant, fulfilling life on this fruitful earth. God wanted to share the riches of this earth with beings we refer to as humans, who would work, play and build families under the government of God.

It never happened! It still has not occurred 6,000 years later in man's society, except in the Church of God.

Before venturing into the realm of parent-child relationships, let's get an overview of the purpose of human life from the great Creator God. God had something in mind when He created man, and that purpose greatly impacts these parent-child relationships.

Before the creation of man, God

created angels and placed them on this earth to dress and keep it and administer His government. This was done for a while, but the angels lacked character, which God could not create by fiat. Notice what happened, as explained by Herbert W. Armstrong:

"Look, now again at God's overall supreme *PURPOSE*. It is to develop *GODLY, PERFECT CHARACTER IN THE MILLIONS OF MANKIND WHO SHALL DO THIS CREATIVE COMPLETION THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE LIMITLESS PHYSICAL UNIVERSE!*

"That is THE AWESOME PURPOSE!

"For this *PURPOSE*, God started by creating millions of angels — spirit beings. Then He created the *PHYSICAL UNIVERSE* and this earth, and He put angels here to develop this earth, ruled by *THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD*.

"But the king He set as ruler — *LUCIFER* — rebelled, revolted, misled a third of all the angels, and *THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD* no longer governed the earth.

"Lucifer was the supreme masterpiece. If Lucifer and his angels went wrong, there was no assurance the

other two thirds would not.

"As God surveyed this tragic cataclysm, He must have realized it left *HIMSELF* as the *ONLY BEING* who will not *and* *CANNOT SIN!* The only possible *ASSURANCE* of accomplishing His great *PURPOSE* was for Him now to *reproduce Himself!*

"But let us answer another question before proceeding:

"*WHY* is it *IMPOSSIBLE* for God to sin? No greater power exists that will prevent Him — but God has simply by His own power — supreme and above all power — set Himself that He *will not!*

"What God saw was this. *No being less than God* could be *certainly* relied upon *NEVER* to sin, that is, *NEVER* to turn against God's *LAW*, and God's government, which makes possible His ultimate *PURPOSE*. To fulfill His *PURPOSE* for the entire *UNIVERSE*, God saw that nothing less than *HIMSELF*, and His holy, righteous and perfect *CHARACTER*, could be *absolutely relied upon* to carry out His *SUPREME PURPOSE* throughout the entire, vast, endless *UNIVERSE!*" (*The Incredible Human Potential*, New York: Everest House Publishers, Special Commemorative Edition, 1978, pp. 59-60).

Almighty God is reproducing Himself. This is vital knowledge we must have as parents and potential parents.

Children not born evil

There are many philosophies of child rearing and parental responsibility toward children. When I was a child growing up, society considered that children were to be "seen and not heard."

Today, children are the oppressors and have the controlling hand in many cases. In modern society, the roles of parent and child are horribly confused. Parents are too busy to fulfill the needs of the children — fathers and mothers work and spend little time at home. Families are disintegrating.

Children grow up not being taught right from wrong. Their values are primarily determined from television or their peers, since families have little contact. A recent poll indicated that the average family spends only 19 minutes a day together.

God does not leave us ignorant as

During the course of 20 years, the needs of a baby change dramatically . . . we must help our children develop physically, emotionally and in spiritual understanding. . . . God demands it.

parents. God teaches us — gives us knowledge, understanding and the truth about His way — and we are on trial as parents. God is evaluating our desire and ability to teach and lead others. What better place to learn than in a family situation?

We must understand that children are not born evil. At birth babies are helpless and know nothing. They are totally dependent upon the parents to provide their every need. There is nothing in their minds when that first breath of life enters the lungs for the first time. But what happens then?

We know that man has the capacity to learn. God created man with a brain. The brain itself is virtually identical to any animal brain, though differing in size. But God added another dimension to the human creation that animals do not have — the spirit in man.

God places within man, probably at birth, a nonphysical, spiritual essence. He refers to this essence as "the spirit in man."

This spirit essence, coupled with the brain, enables man to think, reason, discern and make decisions. Man's spirit provides an understanding of physical things (I Cor. 2:11). But spiritual discernment is not within the scope of man, except by the addition of another ingredient — the Spirit of God (verse 14).

Within the framework of this understanding of the spirit in man lies the basis for our understanding our own children as well as ourselves.

Every human creation has the spirit in man to discern natural or physical things but not spiritual truths. The Spirit of God coupled with the spirit in man adds the dimension of comprehending and fulfilling spiritual things. But babies and youths — our own children — do not have that spiritual dimension. They can receive it only after repentance, baptism and the laying on of hands of one of God's true ministers.

Babies possess the spirit in man and begin to absorb knowledge at birth. They are fleshly minded, only absorbing physical knowledge. God says that this fleshly or carnal mind, or the mind of the flesh, "is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7).

What made this fleshly mind evil? Did God create it that way? An emphatic no! The fleshly mind is not evil of itself. Neither did God make it evil. But the natural mind of man is lacking. It is incomplete. It requires the Spirit of God to be complete. But what occurs before a person receives the mind of God?

The carnal mind, as the apostle Paul explains, is a mind influenced by Satan. Man is not conscious or aware of it, but it occurs nevertheless from a very early age. Satan has a dramatic impact on the human mind, even as he did with Adam, and has blinded the whole human race (II Cor. 4:4).

This factor — Satan's influence — is what makes the natural mind become evil and turn against God. This is the invisible power that works in the entirety of the world, making mankind the children of disobedience (Eph. 2:2-3, Rev. 12:9).

Just the human brain with the addition of the spirit in man is not evil. It is the added impact of Satan's spirit that works in man to cause him to disbelieve and disobey God. It is this same influence that works in all children. Yes, even in children of converted parents.

However, if we are converted, we are promised in I Corinthians 7:14 that our children are holy — even because of a single believing parent. It is reassuring to know they do have access to God, if they want it.

The process of growing up

Children are no more aware of Satan's subtle influence than are the vast majority of adults. Nevertheless, the impact is there. Satan does not neglect our children, but we can and

do unless we follow God's admonition.

Babies are subject to Satan's influence early in life. No one is immune! Vanity, jealousy, lust and greed creep in early and manifest themselves. Young children become selfish at an early stage in life. They don't know why, they just do, and as their minds develop Satan has more impact.

Resentment against the parents begins to manifest itself. Rebellion and hostility mount as a youngster approaches puberty. And human nature can become full-blown during the teenage years if we as adults do not understand our parental responsibilities and comprehend what is happening to our very own children.

This understanding is vital if we are to fulfill our responsibilities to God and our children.

Why do children go bad?

Children are not born evil. They *become* evil, and grow up into adulthood and retain that evil in their natures. The human mind and substance become deceitful and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9).

God never intended it that way. But the first man Adam made a choice — a wrong choice — and all of his children have followed in his footsteps. All are subject to the influence of Satan. So can we as parents do anything? Yes, we can, and God expects us to learn to fulfill our roles.

Children are dynamos, having seemingly boundless energy. They are like 500-horsepower diesel engines at full throttle. Some children are permitted to sit and spin their wheels wantonly. Others become runaway trucks racing through every intersection and breaking every law.

From birth, they begin to grow. A 7½ pound boy or girl, 21 inches in length, grows very rapidly with each week, month and year. Before we are even significantly aware of it, they

are at school age; by this time, most authorities believe that their personalities, learning abilities and basic potentials are set.

How much impact have we had upon them by the time they are age 6? A great deal, whether it was planned or accidental. Very soon our children become teenaged — the magic age for them, but many times seemingly a cursed age for their parents.

The growth and development process is apparent throughout the basic growth years, between birth and age 20. But there is a dramatic spurt during the early teenage years, with not only physical but also mental development. All of these years are critical. This is the age when Satan can have the greatest impact, during the development of the body and the mind.

The mind is a beautiful instrument that needs challenge, fulfillment and identity. But the teenage mind is immature, inexperienced and unbridled unless we have done our part as parents. Parents must properly guide their children during this dramatic period of growth, but this is the age when guidance is frequently grossly neglected.

Parents often are ill-prepared for these teenage years, reading hostility and resentment as a personal affront rather than recognizing the source of it. But we must help our children comprehend this phenomenon and assist in the maturing process.

Without parental leadership, guidance and direction at this critical stage, youths left to their own devices gravitate to drugs, alcohol, crime, violence and immoral sexual activity. Oh, they don't intend to — it just happens this way to thousands of youths daily. This subtle drift will inevitably occur unless children are taught, supervised, led and corrected by the parents.

We cannot afford to neglect our children! Time spent with children at any age is an investment in their and our futures. Perhaps this is doubly true during this critical stage in their lives.

Family under attack

The family in this generation is threatened with extinction. On one hand, we have thrills and excitement

in a tinsel, sparkling world that defies the imagination. But families are not close. Rather, they are disintegrating, breaking up.

In one public school class, virtually every friend of my 7-year-old son lived in a one-parent home. Marital breakups and divorces are rampant. With parents unable to solve their problems and keep their families together, fulfilling God's original admonition to Adam and Eve, it is no wonder our youths are going awry. Parents are first going awry.

The parental care of children continues throughout their and our lives. The parental role always exists, but it is ever changing because of the needs of the children. A few parents detest the role of providing every need for their children — feeding, bathing, changing diapers and caring for a baby 24 hours a day. They would prefer that the children be older and care for themselves. Others would prefer that their children always remain helpless as babies.

But neither of these wishes is realistic or proper. During the course of 20 years, the needs of a baby change dramatically through childhood, youth and young adulthood. We as parents must be prepared mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually to fulfill these needs. And we must help our children develop physically, emotionally and in spiritual understanding. God expects it. In fact, God demands it.

In Malachi 4:5-6 the Old Testament concludes with a prophecy concerning parents and children. We are called upon to set the pace — to fulfill a vital role in this age of degeneracy, family disintegration and divorce.

It seems paradoxical, but the Elijah to come is to "turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I [God] come and smite the earth with a curse [utter destruction]."

Mr. Armstrong and this Work are fulfilling that role of Elijah. However, we must each fulfill that responsibility and set the pace in our own families. Nowhere else can or will this happen in this age. It is incumbent upon us to fulfill our job fervently and with dedication before our God. □

(To be continued)

Big Sandy

(Continued from page 1)

the decision been made to reopen the Big Sandy campus, they could not have become Ambassador students. They seemed thrilled and overjoyed at the blessing God had opened for them.

Then the sophomores came by for a handshake. One year at Ambassador, Pasadena campus, showed its fruits in their faces and manners. I'm sure they will set a fine example for the new freshmen as Ambassador students. Then the faculty came by. And what a capable, loyal and competent faculty they are! And all are members of God's Church!

Following the reception we looked in for a few moments at the beginning of a student dance in the beautiful dining hall. Then a private dinner in the faculty dining room with our party and the officials of the new college.

Friday morning was orientation for students. I spoke, after introduction of faculty members to students.

There was a faculty luncheon in the faculty dining room. Again I spoke briefly to the faculty. In the afternoon there was a meeting in the science auditorium with campus employees, whom I addressed for about an hour. Friday evening Mr. Neff took the Bible study.

Sabbath we had the overflow attendance at the afternoon service. The large auditorium was completely filled. Also the dining room, piped in with speakers. Also one or two other rooms were filled. It seemed all faces were beaming.

Friday evening there was a dinner for ministers from the surrounding area and wives — some 70 or 80 people. I spoke briefly, giving an update on the Work from Pasadena.

Then the grand finale, a concert in the main auditorium, conducted by Roger Bryant, the new chorale director, and his wife, and Ruth Walter. Mr. Bryant is a professional tenor. I heard he has performed with the San Francisco Opera Company. His wife is a concert pianist. The two women pianists played a two-piano duet after each had played solo and Mr. Bryant had sung several arias. The concert was a happy ending of a most happy and inspiring beginning! □

MINISTRY

Prelude to the 'Day of the Lord'

Prepared by Richard Sedliacik

DAY OF THE LORD

How would you react if God suddenly spoke to you and warned you to take drastic action to save your life from imminent destruction?

Would you listen attentively? Would you heed what He had to say? Or would you just scoff and disregard His warning?

Few realize that God has already spoken to us today: "God, who . . . spake in time past . . . by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (Heb. 1:1-2).

The words of God for mankind have been faithfully recorded in the Bible. We are told that all scripture was inspired by God for our instruction and correction (II Tim. 3:16). Therefore, when you read the Bible, God is speaking directly to you!

The book of Revelation is full of warnings of awesome, catastrophic events soon to occur. In the last chapter of this most misunderstood book of the Bible, the Revelator — Jesus Christ — concludes: "Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth [acts on] the sayings of the prophecy of this book" (Rev. 22:7).

Bible prophecies are not to be taken lightly. They will have a tremendous effect on your future! As the old saying goes, "Forewarned is forearmed." If you will heed the warnings God recorded, He promises a way of escape from the coming time of great tribulation.

The scriptural warnings of Jesus' "Olivet Prophecy" recorded in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21 take on special meaning in our 20th century. The world is experiencing the conditions Christ foretold would precede these great worldwide catastrophes. Notice what He said would happen.

1. What did Jesus warn about those who would proclaim He is the Christ? Matt. 24:5, 11. What are we told elsewhere about these so-called representatives of Christ? II Cor. 11:13-15. Who do these ministers actually represent? Verse 15. How could this be? Rev. 12:9.

2. What further events did Jesus predict would take place before His Second Coming? Matt. 24:6-7.

In a world spiritually deceived through the efforts of the devil and his false ministers preach-

ing a false Christ and substituting a false gospel in place of Christ's true Gospel, we are now in the recess between stages of world war. The first two world wars have occurred. In this interim, brushfire wars have raged and "rumours of wars" continue. Famines, disease epidemics and earthquakes will continue to grow in severity and culminate in world war. Hundreds of millions of earth's inhabitants will experience their effects.

3. But are these events only the "beginning of sorrows" — or, more properly translated, of travail or tribulation? Verse 8.

This four-part "beginning of sorrows" is also pictured by the first four seals — the four horsemen — described in Revelation 6:1-8. For a more detailed explanation of these "sorrows" — false religion, wars, famines, disease — write for our free booklet, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*.

4. How is the fifth seal described in Revelation 6:9-11? What did Jesus say about this time of religious persecution and martyrdom? Matt. 24:9, Luke 21:12-17.

At this point we need to understand that the principle of duality applies to many prophecies. There is a former, typical fulfillment and then a final, antitypical fulfillment.

The religious persecution and martyrdom spoken of in Matthew and Luke did actually occur, in the typical or preliminary sense, in the nation of Judah when the Roman armies crucified tens of thousands of Jews about A.D. 70. Millions more from various nationalities were also tortured and killed by the great false church during the Middle Ages (Rev. 17:6, 18:24). Many of these were true Christians. Jesus said more Christians would be martyred at the end time; John said the same in Revelation 6:11.

This future martyrdom, of which the earlier martyrdoms were only a type, will occur at the time to which John, the inspired writer of the book of Revelation, was carried forward in vision — just prior to the "Day of the Lord."

5. How does Luke 21:20-24 describe what will happen to Judah and Jerusalem (the Jews of the modern nation Israel) just before Christ returns?

MINISTRY

Verse 23 is made plainer in the modern English of the Moffatt translation: "For sore anguish will come upon the land and Wrath on this people."

6. Notice the parallel account in Matthew 24:15-20. Do these verses foretell a time of great tribulation in the world? Verse 21. What would happen to all mankind if Christ did not intervene in the affairs of men? Verse 22.

7. Who will be responsible for inspiring the persecution, warfare and man's inhumanity to man during this soon-coming terrible time of trouble? Rev. 12:12. Why will he be so wrathful? Notice the last part of verse 12.

This period of great worldwide tribulation is Satan's wrath. It will be unleashed upon God's Church, Jacob (the descendants of ancient Israel) and on the whole world because the devil will know he has but a short time left to work deception, destruction and death before being imprisoned for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-3).

8. However, does God promise to protect those of His end-time Church — those who faithfully keep His Word and do His Work — from the wrath of the devil? Rev. 3:7-8, 10.

These promises of protection are for the Philadelphia era of God's Church, which God has raised up through His apostle, Herbert W. Armstrong. Only this Church is carrying on the Work of God today.

Even though God's Church is relatively small, Jesus has opened the powerful "doors" of radio, television, the printing press and personal evangelism to His Church that it may preach and publish His Gospel of the Kingdom of God as a warning witness to the world. And for faithfully obeying His Word and doing His works, Christ promises to spare His servants from the "hour of temptation" — the terrible wrath of Satan.

9. Revelation 12 also speaks of God's end-time Church, personifying it as a woman. Will God provide His Church with shelter away from the wrath of the devil? Rev. 12:13-16.

This end-time prophecy tells of an escape from the terrible tribulation caused by Satan the devil. God's Church will be in a "wilderness" place untouchable by Satan or by his human agents or by the devastation of a world at war around them. Regardless of where the place of protection is, the way to make sure you will be there is clear.

10. Unfortunately, will there be some of God's people who will not qualify for this protection, who will have to go through the coming time of Satan's wrath? Rev. 12:17. Why will those of the Laodicean era of God's Church not be accounted worthy to escape? Rev. 3:14-19.

Some truly Spirit-begotten Christians will have become so "lukewarm," so out of contact with God and consequently lackadaisical in living the Christian life and doing their part in God's Work, that they will have to go through the Great Tribulation and face even torture and martyrdom to wake them up! Because God loves them (verse 19) and wants them in His Family, He will allow this to happen as a punishment (Heb. 12:5-8) so they may see their spiritual "nakedness" and therefore repent before it's too late.

11. How is the sixth seal described? Rev. 6:12-13. Will a great earthquake occur at this time? Verse 12. Where else are these spectacular events described? Matt. 24:29. How soon after the fifth seal does all this occur? Same verse, first word.

The sixth seal consists of awesome heavenly signs — sun and moon becoming dark and the "stars" falling. Spectacular meteor showers will make the starry heavens appear to be crashing earthward!

12. What other great heavenly sign occurs at this time? Matt. 24:30, Rev. 6:14. Are all these events intended to warn the world that God's wrath upon rebellious mankind is about to begin — that the "Day of the Lord," with its punishments for sin, is about to commence? Rev. 6:15-17, Joel 2:30-31, Zeph. 1:14-18, Isa. 2:19-21.

13. What is the reason for the punishment God is soon going to bring upon this world? Isa. 24:4-6. Notice especially verse 5.

14. Will this punishment in reality be a manifestation of God's great love for the humanity He created? Notice again the principle in Hebrews 12:5-8. To what end will God's punishments be directed? I Tim. 2:3-4, II Pet. 3:9.

As any wise and loving father punishes his children for their own good when they refuse to respond to kind and loving verbal admonition, so an all-loving, all-wise God will finally plead with rebellious humanity in the only language humanity will be able to understand.

God is going to punish this world with righteous judgments — with plagues so terrible many will at last recognize God is dealing with them. Many will then heed and turn from their wicked ways to seek God and His law of love.

That coming period of punishment, described in more than 30 different prophecies scattered through both Old and New Testaments as the "Day of the Lord," shall lead directly into the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and world peace at last. □

(This subject to be continued.)

Your Feet

(Continued from page 7)

the success of the Work. They should carry us to our jobs so we can help the Work financially.

And just as important, they ought to travel in the paths of righteousness so our prayers for the Work are more effective. It is the effectual fervent prayer of a *righteous* man that avails much (Jas. 5:16).

The right way

David often examined the paths his feet were following. Sometimes he found they were not going the right way. What did he do then? He got back on course — quickly! “I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments” (Ps. 119:59-60).

Throughout Jesus’ whole life He set an example for us that we “should follow his steps” (I Pet. 2:21). Those are some mighty big steps to follow, but with God’s help we can do it.

The Bible has some interesting things to say about the future of the feet of the saints. God states that “you that fear my name . . . shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet” (Mal. 4:2-3). “And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly” (Rom. 16:20).

One day soon the rest of the world will understand how really good is the message that we are carrying. They will praise our feet, as Isaiah prophesied.

John also wrote of such an occasion: “Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee” (Rev. 3:9).

The awesome destiny God has promised for any human who yields to Him is contained in the ultimate fulfillment of Hebrews 2:8: God will “put *all things in subjection under his feet*. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him”!

That awesome destiny is part of the good news we have been given to carry. Are your feet headed in that direction? □

Back on Track?

(Continued from page 5)

that includes BELIEVING He will do what He promised.

YOU MUST BELIEVE God will heal! You can believe another human person if he promises to do something for you. WHY can’t you believe God will do what He has promised — what Jesus suffered a terrible beating with stripes for, that you may be healed? WHY is it hard for you to believe God means what He says — that He WILL DO what He has promised? WHY can you believe a human doctor who is a sinner (for all have sinned) — and cannot believe GOD? WHY?

Medicines can’t heal. Drugs can’t

God expects you and me today to BELIEVE HIS WORD — to RELY ON HIM to keep His promises! . . . Jesus’ suffering by being beaten with stripes was in vain unless God’s Word is good — unless we are healed!

heal and always have side effects, which often are harmful. Surgeon’s knives can’t heal. A famous doctor said, “If all the medicines in the world were thrown into the ocean, it would be so much better for humanity, and so much worse for the fishes.”

According to your faith

But, brethren, “According to YOUR faith be it unto you.” If you can’t believe God when He speaks and promises, you simply have no hope of salvation and eternal life!

These are the LAST DAYS! These are days of trying and testing. We are taking FINAL EXAMS to see whether we make it into God’s Kingdom. Must some of you FAIL?

When I was in school, in the hours before final exams, I really “crammed.” I “crammed” desperately, for I had lagged somewhat during the school year. But by the last spurt of effort, I usually got close to 100 percent in final exams — and I passed after all.

Fasting and prayer often will

restore faith. It will bring faith from God if you never had it before.

I fasted and prayed for two days once in a serious emergency when the lives of two members of my family were at stake. I spent the first hour in prayer. The second hour in Bible reading to try to see why I lacked faith. The third hour in contemplation, self-examination, trying to THINK where I was wrong and why my faith had weakened. The next hour again in prayer, then an hour in Bible study, an hour in contemplation and so on for two days, while fasting. At the end of that time, slightly less than two days, FIVE miracles happened, and a few days later a sixth I had not asked.

We are all now in the time of final exams. Looking down into this very

time, Jesus said, “Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8).

Brethren, are some of you going to Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? King Ahaziah of Israel was severely injured and in sickness. But he sent for Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, for healing (II Kings 1:1-4).

But God said through the prophet Elijah, “Isn’t it because there is not a God in Israel that you go to Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron?” This Baal-zebub was known as “the god of flies” — the medical god of that day. So God said the king must die because of lack of faith.

Is it because there is no GOD whose Word is good for healing, that some of YOU brethren rear your children relying on Baal-zebub in the form of the doctors of our day? Which God is in YOUR home? In which do you have FAITH?

Brethren, let us be READY when Christ comes. Do your cramming to learn FAITH now, for the time is short. Let’s all make it into His Kingdom! □

Does God Heal Today?



Is the day of miracles past? Does the living God heal sickness and disease today upon believing prayer? Or was healing performed only by Christ and the original apostles? Is healing always God's will? Did God raise up medical science for our day? What about modern faith healers and public

healing services? Herbert W. Armstrong answers these questions and explains the official position of God's Church in our *free* booklet, *The Plain Truth About Healing*. Why not send for your copy today?

THE
PLAIN TRUTH
ABOUT
HEALING