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Of Christ's Kingdom

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Fruits of the Spirit

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For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.—2 Peter 1:8

Character development is a major theme of the New Testament. Christianity is not merely an intellectual concept; it is a way of life. The Christian religion must be lived to be meaningful. This requires serious studies of what God expects of his people and then diligent application of these principles in daily living.

Jesus, in opening the Christian dispensation, gave his keynote in the Sermon on the Mount. There he enumerates a number of characteristics which would make his listeners "blessed" or happy. These beatitudes include admonitions to poverty of spirit, mourning for sin, meekness, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, mercifulness, purity of heart, peacemaking, and the endurance of persecution (Matthew 5:3–12).

Peter catalogs a number of these principles in the verses preceding the theme text above. He describes them as building blocks to be added one to the other. His list includes faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love (2 Peter 1:5–7).

Paul, in his pastoral letters to both Timothy and Titus, lists a number of character requirements for those who would serve the church as either elder or deacon (1 Timothy 3:1–13; Titus 1:6–8; 2:1–10).

Again, in Colossians 3:8–13, Paul describes this development of Christian character as a change of garments. He urges the Colossians to "put off" or remove such bad habits as anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, and corrupt communication and to replace them or "put on" mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, and longsuffering.

In this issue of **THE HERALD** another list of these Christian attributes is treated. These are the ones listed as "fruits of the spirit" by the apostle Paul in Galatians 5:22,23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness,

temperance: against such there is no law." Individual articles treat each of these spiritual "fruits." These are given as replacements for a long list of "works of the flesh" which include such negative characteristics as adultery, idolatry, hatred, wrath, envyings, and drunkenness.

Changing Habits

A speaker built a section of his remarks on the phrase, "Nothing changes unless something changes." Each individual's life is composed of a number of habits developed over the years. These become deep-grained and a part of character. Many of these habits are, at best, unproductive of righteousness and, at worst, wrong and evil. These habits will remain a part of the person's character unless there is a determined decision to change them for new habits based upon the principles of righteousness.

Jesus gave a short parable in Luke 11:24–26 that is pertinent to this point. "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first."

It is not enough to remove old habits. They must be replaced by correct patterns of thought and action. If not, they will be replaced by other habits that may be worse than those that have been removed. It is this process of substituting new fruits and graces of the spirit for the old habits of the fallen flesh that constitutes true character development.

It is the hope of the editors that the brief treatments of the "fruits of the spirit" may be helpful to each of our readers as they seek to grow into the likeness of Christ and to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect."—Matthew 5:48

Love

An Ode to Agape

Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.—1 Timothy 1:5

A verse by verse study in 1 Corinthians 13

Agape is a Greek word adopted by the New Testament writers to describe a higher form of love than that described by the traditional word *phileo*. Cramer in his *Biblical-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek* has this to say: "We find agape used to designate a love unknown to writers outside the New Testament—love in its fullest conceivable form; love as it is the distinguishing attribute, not of humanity, but in its strictest sense, of divinity" (p. 14). John A. Meggison, in the Appendix to his *Notes on the Bible*, styles *phileo* as "a love that grows out of relationship or craving," while *agape* is a "love that goes out voluntarily without any intermingling of selfishness—the one being ordinary love, the other being the higher form of friendship love." Thus "charity," signifying an outgoing generosity that expects nothing in return, is not a bad translation of the word, though inadequate to its full scope of meaning.

The Contrasts—Verses 1 to 3

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Two of the three contrasts which Paul draws between other signs of religious involvement and love are based on the discussion in the preceding and following chapters on the subject of the gifts of the spirit. Much was made of these outward manifestations of the spirit. In the church at Corinth undue importance was being placed on these miraculous gifts. As an apostle, Paul possessed perhaps most, if not all, of the gifts of the spirit. Yet he says in 1 Corinthians 14:18,19, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." These external signs, he states, were for a sign, "not to them which believe, but to them which believe not" (1 Corinthians 14:22).

While the "tongues of men" seem to refer to the various languages of earth, some have tried to deduce from the phrase "tongue of angels" some mysterious unknown language. This is used to defend the doctrine of glossolalia. Much more likely, the phrase is meant to confer the concept of great eloquence. The commentator Barnes writes: "The language

of angels here seems to be used to denote the highest power of using language, or of the most elevated faculty of eloquence and speech." He thus translates the opening phrase: "Were I endowed with the faculty of eloquence and persuasion which we attribute to [angels], and the power of speaking to any of the human family with the power which they have . . ."

Such use of eloquent speech, without converting the heart to expressions of unselfish love, would be no more effective than the brazen trumpets or cymbals with which his audience was familiar from the many festivals held in Corinth.

The second contrast concerns the gifts of prophecy, knowledge and faith (see 1 Corinthians 12:8–10). In 1 Corinthians 14:1,3,4 (NAS) Paul places the gift of prophecy pre-eminent, writing, "Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. . . . But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation. One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church."

Important as were these gifts, however, they were not, even when combined, equal to the exercise of love. The sectarian strife-torn church at Corinth was of considerable concern to the apostle, but the lesson applies with equal force to any church in which a similar spirit of division occurs. Great as may be their progress in the comprehension of the deep mysteries of God, praiseworthy as may be their works of fearlessly giving forth a witness to the cause of Christ, strong as they may be in their expressions of faith, if they possess not the love required to transcend their differences and work with others the Lord has similarly called, all is naught.

In the third contrast Paul turns from the miraculous gifts to the sacrificial life style of the Christians, even altruistic charity to the extent of completely depleting their resources. The "giving of their bodies to be burned" may well refer to the New Testament realization that the Old Testament animal sacrifices represented the consecrated lives of the Christians. Such sacrifices, however noble as they were, were not what would make them worthy to the Lord who, above all, sought the indwelling spirit of *agape* love.

In later years the lesson became even more specific. During the Middle Ages many martyred Christians paid the ultimate penalty for their faithfulness and were literally burned at the stake. Even such martyrdoms, unless they were accompanied by true love, were of no meritorious value.

Still others draw the lesson from the three Hebrews who were cast into the fiery furnace for their fidelity to Jehovah. Even such acts of faithfulness, unaccompanied by love, would be profitless.

It is interesting to note another variation of this verse. Westcott and Hort, following three ancient manuscripts, translates the verse, "And if ever I should beside the body of me, in order that I might boast," love profiteth me nothing. The danger always remains to give

ourself glory for the sacrifices we make. Such an attitude countervails the entire purpose of Christianity.

The Attributes of Love—Verses 4 to 7

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

It has been well stated that love cannot be defined but can only be demonstrated by what it does. *Agape* finds its expression in all the fruits of the spirit. Quoting an unknown author, Charles Russell on page 186 of *The New Creation*, shows this relationship:

(1) Joy—Love exultant. (2) Peace—Love in repose. (3) Long-suffering—Love enduring. (4) Gentleness—Love in society. (5) Goodness—Love in action. (6) Faith—Love on the battlefield of life. (7) Meekness—Love in resignation. (8) Temperance [moderation]—Love in training.

In the chapter under consideration, the apostle enumerated twelve attributes of love.

Suffereth long—He begins with a quality of *agape* that related particularly to the Corinthians in their sectarian divisive strife. *Agape* will bear with others, looking for the long-range good, rather than the short-range gain. The Greek word here is *makrothumia*, meaning literally "of a long or patient spirit."

Is kind—Tyndale translates the word here as "courteous." As such it is the companion of "suffereth long." The latter puts up with the discourtesy of others, while the former reciprocates with actions of benevolence and kindness in return. It is one thing to put up with the faults of others, it is yet a different action to bear it kindly and with gentleness.

Envieth not—It is, perhaps, no coincidence that the words envy and zeal are translations of the same Greek word. In both cases it represents intense desire, one for bad things and one for good. Envy is an emotion that is aroused by many causes. We may envy a man because he is happy while we are miserable; well, while we are sick; caressed, while we are neglected or overlooked; successful, while we meet with disappointment; handsome, while we are ill-formed; honored with office, while we are overlooked. We may envy him because he has a better farm than we have, or be a more skillful mechanic, or be a more successful physician, or lawyer, or have more honor amongst other Christians. In all of these ways, love will seek to cast out envy and replace it with pleasure at the exaltation of others.

Doth not vaunt itself—Once again the message, while applicable to all Christians today, seems specially tailored for the situation in Corinth where one claims to be of Paul, another of Apollos, another of Cephas, and some even of Christ. The Greek word translated "vaunt" is *perpereuomi*. Strong's Concordance suggests that it originated as a

duplication of the Greek word for *peran*, the word for "beyond." Such a word is fitting for the concept of braggadocio which likes to retell a story, going over and beyond the truth to make one's position more prominent.

Is not puffed up—Expressions of self-importance usually cloak feelings of insecurity. Recognizing one's own unworthiness, there is a natural tendency to bolster one's spirits by the exaggeration of some accomplishment. This operates in opposition to love since that grace elevates another's accomplishments over those of self.

Doth not behave itself unseemly—True love not only acts becomingly but avoids even the appearance of those things which could bring disgrace on the one loved and, more particularly, on the Lord and his cause. Love conforms to the norms of society and seeks to go beyond them. Here agape passes out of the realm of thought into the actions it provokes. The one other usage of the Greek word in the New Testament (1 Corinthians 7:36) relates the word specifically to physical love between a man and a woman. While generally advising the single state, Paul advises marriage on the basis of this word between a man and the woman he has been courting if the omission of such a step would caused emotional or financial hardship to her.

Agape seeketh not her own—Here is an instance where the agape of love goes beyond the phileo. The latter is responsive, based upon reactions to stimuli. Agape manifests itself, even when to do so is seemingly to one's detriment. True love not only seeks the highest spiritual welfare for one's self, but also for one's neighbor. Love is never satisfied except in the welfare, comfort, and salvation of all.

Is not easily provoked—Some of the force of this attribute is lost in the King James translation. Other ancient translations, some even pre-dating the King James, more correctly render the verse simply "love is not provoked." The Greek word does not convey the amount of provocation to anger, but simply pits agape against all provocation. The admonition is to a "cool head," carefully weighing as objectively as possible the facts of a case, and not letting the emotions rule with either anger, bitterness, or strife.

Thinketh no evil—Once again the apostle calls attention to the mental condition of the one who professes agape love. Here he follows the lead of the Lord Jesus in his Sermon on the Mount, tracing the action to its proper beginning—in the thought process. If those emotions which demonstrate the lack of agape love are to be stopped at all, they must be stopped at their source, in the mind.

Rejoiceth not in iniquity—This qualification of love is easy when it is exercised toward a friend. However human nature tends to rejoice in bad reports about those with whom we are at enmity. The true test of agape is when we are sorry to hear of our enemy's misfortunes or anything that substantiates our low opinion of our enemies. This tendency is directly contrary to that of love, and must be constantly fought.

But rejoiceth in the truth—This completes the couplet started by the preceding phrase. What is our reaction when the report of iniquity is the truth? Often truth is nebulous.

Complete truth is not easily discerned. What appears true to one may appear false to another. The search for truth is one of the functions of true love. When it comes to ascertaining the accuracy of charges, the Lord sets out a complete procedure in Matthew 18:15–20. Complete truth includes viewing a matter from the perspective of all sides, with all mitigating circumstances taken into account.

Beareth all things—The last four graces of agape deal with its staying power. The apostle is laying the groundwork for his discussion in the next verses of the temporary nature of the miraculous gifts in contrast with the permanence of love. It is permanent, first, because it bears all burdens. No load is too heavy, no injustice too great, but that, knowing the temporary nature of the present evil world, they cannot be borne with the heavenly goals in view. As Paul writes in Romans 8:18, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Believeth all things—The Greek word here, as Professor Vine points out, is not merely to place credence in, but to rely upon. Love is not gullible, but is willing to risk loss. "Perfect love is not suspicious, but is, on the contrary, disposed to be trustful. It acts on the principle that it is better, if necessary, to be deceived a hundred times than to go through life soured by a suspicious mind—far better than to accuse or suspect even one person unjustly." (R4919)

Hopeth all things—This quality refers more to the frame of the mind of one who may feel injured by another. Not only is he willing to bear indignities and quick to believe the words of the supposed wrongdoer, but he sincerely hopes that future events will prove that his trust was well placed. How pertinent were these words to the divided church at Corinth! How appropriate today!

Endureth all things—Whereas "bear eth all things" is passive, relating to the uncomplaining acceptance of trials, "endureth all things" is active. The soul that is united to the God of love by the link of love cannot be crushed, cannot be overcome, because this is the divine will, the divine arrangement.

The Permanence of Agape—Verses 8 to 10

Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

After extolling the virtues of agape love, the apostle returns to the main theme of chapters 12 through 14. The gifts of the spirit which the Corinthians so coveted were not only inferior to love in quality, they were also inferior in durability. Tongues, knowledge, and prophecy were only temporary gifts of the spirit.

It should be noted here that the knowledge to which the apostle refers is not the ability to accumulate facts and join them in the thinking process. Such knowledge we are assured is eternal. We read of God's eternal kingdom in Habakkuk 2:14, "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." Rather it was the miraculous special inspirations of knowledge that were granted as a spiritual gift to some in the early church.

Not only were these gifts to be temporary, but they were only partial as well. Even the inspired apostles did not possess all knowledge. If their knowledge was only partial, it followed that their prophesying, telling others of their knowledge, could only be partial as well.

Verse ten becomes the critical verse in the discussion. It implies that the partial gifts would continue until "that which is perfect" would come. The expression "that which is perfect" is frequently applied to the perfection of being that awaits the resurrected faithful at the second advent of Christ. However, if that is true, then we should expect that "that which is in part"—the miraculous gifts of knowledge, prophecy, and tongues—would still continue. We do not see evidence of that today despite the many charismatic Christians who claim to possess these gifts. These gifts in the early church were for the purpose of communicating in known languages to those of different nationalities instead of producing unintelligible sounds that pass for the tongues of our day. Prophecy and knowledge were used as internal gifts for the development of the church and not merely for a sign to show that one had "the spirit."

The word translated "perfect" can with equal ease be rendered "mature" or "complete." Since the gifts were for the preliminary development of the church, we would suggest that "that which is perfect" refers to the completed canon of the Bible. The Bible became the tool to replace the partial knowledge and prophecy which preceded it.

In harmony with this, we quote the words of Charles Russell in his book *The At-one-ment Between God and Man*: "All of these 'gifts' were evidently necessary at the inauguration of the Church, at the start of the new age, but became unnecessary after the Church had been established and the canon of the inspired writings had been completed."—p. 179*

Now and Then—Verses 11 to 13

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

In the final section of this chapter the apostle contrasts conditions of the future, "when that which is perfect" has come.

In the first he treats the miraculous gifts of the spirit as children's toys—important tools for their learning process but not an end in themselves. Children think of the present time only, adults look to the work of future years. The gifts were important for the early church in its childhood phase. But these gifts were of little value for the future work of the church.

Rather than learning by rote, the Lord wanted to instruct his followers to think. If they would be part of a future work as priests, judges, and kings, they would need to learn not only the laws of God but why these laws were right and important. The primitive church began to develop their Christian theology only after the Bible was complete. True, they made many errors in their discernment of doctrine, but such errors are also a part of the learning process. The proud and self-satisfied would be led astray by their own worldly "wisdom" while the meek and humble would await the Lord's due time for correction.

In the second contrast he shows how that "now" was like viewing an object through a smoked glass in comparison with the views that would come after "the perfect" arrived. The phrase, "then shall I know even as also I am known" is an apt one. We are known by the Lord, not by our outward appearances, but on the full manifestations of the heart (1 Samuel 16:7; 2 Corinthians 5:16). In the same way as the Lord now knows us, by our heart, the church would come to know him after the Bible was completed. They would learn not to know him merely by his actions, but would be introduced to the very heart of God, learning that, indeed, "God is love" (1 John 4:8,16).

In the final verse Paul breaks away from contrasting agape with the gifts of the spirit and compares it to the higher elements of faith and hope. In a sense, he wraps up his lesson by going back to the themes of verses two and three. Important as was their new-found faith in the gospel, even a deep comprehension of the Bible's mysteries would be temporary if it were not accompanied by the object of that gospel, the development of agape love.

The final contrast was with hope. It was the Christians' hopes for future rectification of all wrongs that enabled them to give so freely of their temporal goods to feed the poor and to face the horrors of torture, the lions of Rome, and burning at the stake. It was for this hope that they could face any rigor with steadfastness. Yet, such hopes would have been vain if they had not been accompanied by the development of agape love.

Love alone endures. Love is the greatest thing. It is not the responsive *phileo* love, though that is important, but the full unselfishness of agape that must be the goal of each follower of the Master. Let us so run that we may obtain.

Joy

Joy in the Lord

My joy is the joy of you all.—2 Corinthians 2:3

Brent Hislop

In scripture the word joy is from a variety of Hebrew and Greek words that convey various shades of meaning—from simple gladness to exultation or transport. One Hebrew word conveys the thought of spinning around with pleasurable emotion.

Joy is an attitude of mind attributed to God. God takes pleasure in his works (Psalms 104:31); in Jesus (Matthew 3:17); and in those that reverence him (Psalms 147:11).

Joy is a fruit of the spirit (Galatians 5:22), and is spoken of as a result of faith (Philippians 1:25) and hope (Hebrews 3:6).

Joy is everywhere spoken of in scripture as highly prized and to be sought after (Psalms 5:11; Luke 6:23; Philippians 4:4).

Joy is contrasted to sadness, weeping, and sorrow (Psalms 30:5; John 16:20–22; Romans 12:15; 1 Corinthians 7:30). Perhaps it is in this contrast we find a good definition of what joy is to the Christian. Christians are told to work out their salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12) and that godly sorrow works repentance to salvation (2 Corinthians 7:10). The Christian is to fear, to sorrow, and to rejoice. While seemingly incongruous, they clearly are not. Fear and sorrow can bring joy and rejoicing. We illustrate this with a simple and yet powerful lesson drawn from the eighth chapter of the book of Nehemiah.

Having completed the rebuilding of Jerusalem's wall under the leadership of Nehemiah, we read that the people assembled themselves as one, to hear Ezra the priest and others read and expound the law.

The account conveys the profound impact the reading of the law had on the people. For these were either those who had gone into the Babylonian captivity or their descendants. As such they had lost much of their connection to the law. As a people they had lost their identity and their understanding of their special relationship with God.

The account says from first light till midday the law was read. Nehemiah 8:8 continues, "so they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave them the sense and caused them to understand the reading." The reaction of the people was to mourn. "For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law." They realized how far they had strayed from the Lord and how culpable they were.

But Nehemiah spoke to the people and said, "This day is holy unto the Lord your God, mourn not, nor weep . . . go your way—eat the fat and drink the sweet . . . neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength." Nehemiah would have the people to understand that the consciousness of sin brought by their renewed understanding of the law was not the ultimate end of the law. But rather repentance to renewal—a renewed relationship with God and the joy of this relationship—would be their strength.

And so it is for the Christian. We stray, we fall short and like Israel of old we suffer a separation from God until godly sorrow leads to repentance and renewed joy in God. Full conviction in God's forgiveness of our failing is fundamental to the rejoicing Christian. In 2Peter 1:8,9, Peter says that if we fail in the development of the fruits and graces of the spirit, it is because we are blind and cannot see afar off, we are not rejoicing in hope and faith, but rather we have forgotten that we have been cleansed of our sins.

The Christian joy is founded on the initial forgiveness of sins through Christ. But perhaps few things are as difficult for one sensitive to their failings and imperfections as to realize God's continued forgiveness. They are inhibited from rejoicing in the Lord as they are weighed down by guilt. David's words in Psalms 32:11 are very telling in this regard. "Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart."

These words of David are specially meaningful when we consider them in their context. Psalm 32 is David's psalm of repentance upon the acknowledgement of his sin in having Uriah slain so he could marry Bathsheba. In verses 3 and 4 he says when he failed to acknowledge his sin he wasted away. But with acknowledgement and repentance (vs. 5) came forgiveness and, as David embraced God's forgiveness, rejoicing in the Lord (vs. 11).

It is remarkable to think of the severity of the sin and yet God forgave the repentant one. This is a lesson Christians must take to heart if they would not be guilt-ridden or discouraged and live below their privilege of rejoicing in the Lord.

We rejoice in faith and hope in the kingdom, where the faithful will drink of the cup of joy anew (Matthew 26:29). We rejoice in the kingdom prospect that "when his glory is revealed, we may be glad with exceeding joy." We rejoice in the prospect of an incorruptible inheritance, undefiled, that fades not away, reserved for the faithful, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time (1 Peter 4:13). "Wherein we greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations. That the trial of our faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Receiving the end of our faith, even the salvation of mankind."—1Peter 1:6–9

This is truly the joy of transport—"eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit." We know something of the joy that shall be, for ourselves and for all creation, and this should illuminate and rejoice our hearts so that the inward joy will find outward expression in the words of our lips and the deeds of our hands, bearing true witness to the majesty and glory of God.

What a privilege it is for the child of God to walk in God's light and truth that leads to the altar of sacrifice and unto God, our exceeding joy (Psalms 43:4). Paul says of God, "in him we live, move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). The righteous are to rejoice before the Lord and sing praises to his name (Psalms 68:3,4).

In Psalm 16:11 we read that in God's presence is fullness of joy. This is to be a present reality. Imagine for a moment this transporting prospect. Yet this joy is not to be only in prospect of what shall be, it must also be a present reality, rejoicing in what is current, even rejoicing in the midst of tribulation and temptations (2 Corinthians 7:4; James 1:2). We are to rejoice always (Philippians 4:4).

Present rejoicing includes taking joy in our brethren (Philippians 4:1). Paul encourages us to spread joy in our fellowship (Ephesians 5:18,19). "Be filled with the spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." The Christian is not to be morose or sullen—if so we are not only living below our privileges, we are not bearing true witness to the majesty and glory of God.

What a privilege it is for a child of God to walk in God's light and truth. They bring such a child to the altar of sacrifice of thanksgiving and unto God, which produces exceeding joy. (Psalms 43:4)

To the faithful will come the privilege, yes, but much more the incomprehensible joy, of being ushered into the presence of God for the first time. Imagine the moment. What would we think or say? What joy that we may extol his praises for eternity.

"I will extol thee, my God, O King; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever. Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever. Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty and of thy wondrous works. The Lord is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works. All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee."—Psalms 145:1–5,9,10

Peace

Peace in Troubled Times

Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.—Romans 14:19

In our troubled times, peace is one of the great goals of all mankind. Everywhere man turns, he sees conflict—between nations, between races, between ethnic groups, between religions, between the young and the old, between the rich and the poor, between neighbors, between family members. Despite a multitude of peace treaties, peace conferences, legislation, governmental rules and requirements, counseling and other efforts at reconciliation, the conflicts grow more heated and more intractable. Try as he might, man cannot seem to reach the elusive goal peace. Man cries: "Peace, peace, when there is no peace."—Jeremiah 6:14

The scriptures clearly explain the reason for this lack of peace. It is a consequence of Adam's sin and resulting condemnation to death. Our first parents lost their "peace with God" through disobedience. The penalty of death brought a fall from the perfection of heart, mind and being originally given to man, and man lost his peace with God and everything else in this planet. Now man fights against nature and against himself in a struggle to dominate his little world, even for a few short years.

God's Plan Will Bring Peace

Against this backdrop of conflict and turmoil, the scriptures offer the hope of recovering the peace that was lost—now to the follower of Christ and in the future to the entire world of mankind. This hope of peace is a natural result of our Heavenly Father being described in the scriptures as a God of peace (Romans 16:20; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews. 13:20). The apostle Paul writes in 1Corinthians 14:33, "for God is not the author of confusion but of peace." Conflict and confusion result from man's continuing disobedience of his creator's laws.

The objective of God's plan of salvation for man is to bring peace to his earthly realm. He will accomplish this, not by lowering his standards and accepting man in his current fallen state, but by reconciling man to himself. "Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight."—Hebrews 13:20,21

The hope of peace is associated with "The Prince of Peace," our Lord Jesus Christ who came to earth at his first advent to pay a ransom for Father Adam (Isaiah. 9:6). Mankind has no hope of achieving peace amongst itself unless it can first be reconciled with God. And so Jesus was made flesh that he might provide the legal means whereby peace with God was possible.

Peace with God

Peace with God is the foundation of any other type of peace. Currently, the human family is described in the scriptures as children of disobedience, children of wrath, strangers and foreigners from God, without Christ, strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world (Ephesians 2:1–3,12). Today, mankind has no peace with God.

But with the Christian, this situation has been changed. "But now in Christ Jesus, ye who were formerly far off, are made near [to God] by the blood of the Anointed one. For he is our peace, he having made both things [Jews and Gentiles] one; and having removed the enmity [the Law], the middle wall of the partition . . . and might reconcile both [Jews and Gentiles] in one body [his own] to God, through the cross, having destroyed the enmity by it. And having come, he announced as glad tidings peace to you the far-off [Gentiles], and peace to us, the near [Jews] because, through him, we both have the introduction to the Father, with one spirit."—Ephesians 2:13–18, Diaglott

Jesus is our peace. Through our faith in the merit of his sacrifice, we have been released from Adamic condemnation and been brought into a condition of "peace with God." "Having been justified, therefore, by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom, also we have been introduced into this favor in which we stand; and we boast in hope of the glory of God."—Romans 5:1,2, Diaglott

Spiritual Peace of the Christian

Peace with God is a great blessing. It means that we are re-united with God, as a member of his family. "Now are we the children of God." (1 John 3:2, Diaglott) It means we can "come boldly unto the throne of heavenly grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need." (Hebrews 4:16) Without this peace, there could be no relationship with God.

To the Christian, peace with God leads to another type of peace, which is to rule or preside over our hearts and minds—the peace of Christ. "Peace I leave to you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid." —John 14:27

Peace of Christ

This is the same peace which our Lord Jesus enjoyed during his first advent. Jesus' peace was centered in God. It came from Jesus' recognition of the Heavenly Father's wonderful character—his justice, wisdom, love and power working together in full harmony to the eternal benefit of God's entire creation. Jesus' faith in God and his acceptance of God's will and trust in God's leading and protection in his life lead to this peace.

This peace endures through loss, persecution, trial and affliction, scorn and contempt. None of the problems of this world nor any man can take it from us. It is founded on

"exceeding great and precious promises" of God and his willingness and faithfulness in fulfilling those promises. In reality, this peace is founded on the character of our Heavenly Father and our faith in him. "And may the God of hope fully establish you with all joys and peace in believing [in faith]; in order that you may abound in that hope, by the energy of the holy spirit."—Romans 15:13, Diaglott

The peace of Christ is needed so that we might endure the trial of our faith and overcome the three mighty foes of the Christian: the world, the flesh and the Adversary. The apostle Peter writes that we should not be surprised by the fiery trials that will test our faith (1Peter 1:6,7; 4:12,13). Such experiences are part of sharing in Christ's sufferings. In the midst of these trials, persecutions and fiery experiences, the peace of Christ helps guard our spiritual minds against discouragement, of giving up and losing our focus on the Lord and doing his will.

What is the Peace of Christ

The peace of Christ is to be developed as a part of our Christian character and is listed by the apostle Paul as one of the fruits of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22,23) It is the tranquility of heart and mind that enables us to leave all decisions and the outcome of all trials in the Lord's hand. With it guarding our heart, we are anxious about nothing but make our petitions and requests known unto God by prayer and supplication. (Philippians 4:6) It is not a peace of idleness, but a peace that comes from taking all matters to the throne of heavenly grace and leaving them there.

The apostle Peter demonstrated this peace when he was taken into prison by Herod shortly after the death of James. Peter's trust and reliance on the Lord were so strong, he could sleep soundly while chained between two soldiers on the night before his trial and possible death (Acts 12:2–6). Paul and Silas exhibited the same kind of peace when they were cast into prison at Philippi. After being beaten with many stripes and put into stocks, they prayed and sang praises unto God at midnight, confident that God would work out all things to their eternal welfare (Acts 16:23–25).

Peace Means Accepting the Lord's Way

Possessing peace means we readily and joyfully accept the Lord's will in our lives, even though it may be different from our own. If the peace of Christ is abiding in our hearts, then our response will be "not as I will but as thou wilt," when God's will is not what our flesh wants (Matthew 26:39). The apostle Paul revealed that the peace of Christ was ruling in his heart when our Lord would not heal his thorn in the flesh. The "thorn" may have been Paul's poor eyesight, damaged by seeing the risen Lord on the way to Damascus. Though the thorn, whatever it may have been, hampered the apostle's life and ministry in many ways, peace in his heart helped him to respond: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."—2 Corinthians 12:9

Peace Means No Fear of Our Foes

With the peace of Christ, we will not fear our foes no matter who they are. "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." (Hebrews 13:6) David's heart was ruled by the peace of God when, as a young boy, he faced Goliath in battle. David's peace was so complete, his response to Goliath was: "Thou comest to me with a sword and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, who thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand . . . that all the earth may know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's and he will give you into our hands."—1 Samuel 17:45–47

The foes we face in the Christian warfare are stronger and more difficult to defeat than Goliath. Yet in our struggle to overcome, the battle is the Lord's. If the peace of Christ is ruling in our heart, we will leave the battle to the Lord and let him deliver victory into our hands.

Peace Rules Over Our Hearts

The apostle Paul exhorts us to "Let the peace of the anointed preside in your hearts" (Colossians 3:15). Peace is to rule or govern our hearts, our thoughts, our affections and our way of life. In the next verse, Paul tells us how to accomplish this. "Let the word of the anointed dwell in you richly; teaching and admonishing each other in all wisdom; in Psalms; in hymns, in spiritual songs singing with gratitude in your hearts to God" (Diaglott). This peace is based on the character and promises of God. The best way to strengthen our understanding of God's character and his promises and increase our faith in them, is to have them dwell or live in our hearts and minds—richly, abundantly, copiously.

We should study them day by day—over and over again—for they remind us that "the battle is the Lord's" and he gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. For us to have the peace that Peter, Paul and David had, we must remember and keep our mental focus on God and his promises.

Called to be Peacemakers

The peace within our hearts must be expressed outwardly to others. "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God" (Matthew 5:9). While the Christ (head and body) will be peacemakers in the ultimate sense in Christ's kingdom, bringing mankind back in peace and harmony with God, we must be peacemakers now both among our fellowship and toward all men. "Let us therefore follow after things which make for peace and things wherewith one may edify another." (Romans 14:19) We must "have peace one with another" and "cultivate peace among yourselves." (Mark 9:50; 1 Thessalonians 5:13)

Peace is an especially important characteristic within the body of Christ. Paul advises that we should "use diligence to preserve the unity of the spirit by the uniting bond of peace." (Ephesians 4:3, Diaglott) It is peace with God that identifies us as members of the body of Christ. The character aspect of peace enables the members of an ecclesia collectively to focus their hearts and minds on the Lord and the truth, enabling the unity of the spirit to grow. As members of the ecclesia under the influence of peace, we build up one another by "speaking the Truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15).

We are to "pursue peace with all" (Hebrews 12:14, Diaglott). "If possible on your part, live peaceably with all men" (Romans 12:18, Diaglott). Our words and actions should promote peace—following the principles of truth and righteousness in a loving way, with a sympathetic love for the groaning creation. "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse . . . Do not repay anyone evil for evil . . . If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."—Romans 12:14,17,18, NIV

Peace is one of the beautiful features of God's plan of salvation and it is one of the beautiful characteristics of the divine character, which we are expected to copy. How thankful we are that God has called us to peace in advance of the world and given to us Christ's peace that our hearts might not be troubled and afraid. Let us continue to let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts and guard them until the trial of our faith is over. It is the only way to be successful in the Christian journey.

Longsuffering

Walk with All Longsuffering

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love.—Ephesians 4:1,2

Timothy Thomassen

The idea of longsuffering is associated with God's patient endurance. Exodus 34:6,7 indicates that the LORD God is "merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." But he is also one who "will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."

"The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love." (Psalms 103:8) "The fierce anger of the LORD shall not return . . . until he have performed the intents of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it."—Jeremiah 30:24

The purpose of God's longsuffering is to lead the creature to repentance. That is his intent! The apostle Paul asked: "despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Romans 2:4) God's longsuffering is a valuable bestowment!

Arrogance is possible if one blinds oneself to the treasures of goodness and patience which are the distinction of God's dealing with his people. Even in the stern discipline which Isaiah saw in the historical experience of Israel, he recognized God's presence to heal and to bless. Isaiah wrote: "In his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old."—Isaiah 63:9

This should be apparent to all who with confidence appeal to God. Not to recognize its meaning would be to brand themselves as ignorant concerning the whole purpose of God's dealing with his creatures. What history teaches is sharpened in individual experience.

Paul shows that there are two alternatives for the person who is arrogantly self-righteous: either he trusts that he will escape judgment, or he despises those qualities which should make him gratefully accept what God does for him. If pride has not blinded his eyes, he will recognize the kindness that is the source from which all gracious and generous actions flow. He should feel something of the forbearance which is slow to press upon him the full consequences of his folly. He should respond to the patience and longsuffering that waits long before actively intervening.

God's kindness is not displayed in order to create a false security or to approve of one's irreverent pride. To possess God's mercy is a privilege, but it carries with it an exacting consequence. One can claim it only if he is willing to use it for its proper purpose, which is always to produce a complete and lasting change.

Anyone who sees what God's goodness means cannot complacently remain in his old condition. He must repent! Those who refuse to do so declare that they know nothing beyond self.

The fact that God has refrained from manifesting outwardly either his love for the Church, or his wrath against evil-doers, is no argument against the lesson that God is teaching his creatures. God has permitted a continuance of sin and sinners in what may seem to some to be a contradiction of his law, manifesting longsuffering toward subjects of destruction; however, it is God's option to avenge. And he will repay! (Romans 12:19)

In every age, especially in times of great pessimism, some have found it difficult to understand how God could have anything in common with humanity. Some have been prompted to make a distinction between God's love and man's love. God's love extends downward to save man by his grace. Man's self-love reaches upward to save himself.

Longsuffering is one of the attributes that Paul urged the Ephesian brethren to develop. He urged them to live a life worthy of the calling that they had received and to be completely humble and gentle as well as patient (longsuffering) while they were bearing with one another in love (Ephesians 4:1,2).

To a Greek in Paul's day, meekness was a second-rate virtue. Lowliness was not a virtue at all! The gospel assigns both qualities their true rating. The nearer man comes to God, the more he should feel his own worthlessness and insignificance. This in turn should produce in him more patience and longsuffering in his dealing with others.

Patience and longsuffering are associated with joy. We find this in Colossians 1:10,11 (ASV), where the apostle Paul admonished the Colossians "to walk worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to the might of his glory, unto all patience and longsuffering with joy."

"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering." (Colossians 3:12) The NIV translation states that God's chosen people should "clothe yourselves with . . . patience." We are to patiently endure with the faults and weaknesses of others.

This means that we should bear with one another's peculiarities of temperament and disposition, freely forgiving one another if there be found cause of offense. Additionally, we should learn to correct ourselves as we see our own faults and imperfections mirrored in others. The standard for all this is found in the Lord's course toward us, for he surely has been generous, kind, forbearing and forgiving.

Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 1:15,16, ASV: "Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief: howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me as chief might Jesus Christ show forth all his longsuffering, for an ensample of them that should thereafter believe on him unto eternal life."

The gospel of Christ is the message of divine compassion toward sinners. We cannot preach that gospel without exhibiting true longsuffering. As a faithful follower of the Lord once commented: "Preach the gospel. Use words if necessary!"

Believers are admonished to imitate their Heavenly Father. "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour."—Ephesians 5:1,2

"Love is patient and kind" (1 Corinthians 13:4). Likewise, we are to be kind to each other, tenderhearted and forgiving, as God in Christ forgave us (Ephesians 4:32).

God's word stresses the importance of being patient and longsuffering. We find this emphasized in the following citations: "exhort with all longsuffering" (2 Timothy 4:2); "imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised" (Hebrews 6:12); "As an example of suffering and patience, brethren, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord" (James 5:10, RSV); "God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built" (1 Peter 3:20, NIV); "Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation" (2 Peter 3:15, NIV).

One of my seventh grade students recently wrote a very touching and heart-rending essay entitled From Civil War To The Land Of The Free. In it, she told of her birth and childhood in Yugoslavia (present Bosnia), the subsequent civil war and her eventual immigration to the United States. Here are some of the words she used to tell her story: civil war, unsafe, military, militant groups, politically powerful, violence, guns, chaos, horrors of war, evil, nationalism, cry, sad, darkest dreams, afraid, scared, kill, die, fighting, aggression, immoral, miserable, worry, fear, hunger, detonations, isolation, dangerous, aggressive, unfriendly, refugees, and tears.

Most of these terms have become part of our vocabulary as a result of sin, but the good news is that this terminology will someday change.

God is a God of justice. He will not endure sin forever. He has promised that he will ultimately deal with those who do not repent and trust in him for salvation (2 Thessalonians 1:5–10).

Yes, the Bible assures us that a time is coming when God will wipe every tear from the eyes of his creation. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things will have passed away (Revelation 21:4, NIV).

We are told in Psalms 46:9,10 that the LORD will make wars to cease and that he will be exalted in the earth. Furthermore, "He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore" (Isaiah 2:4, NIV).

In keeping with God's promise, we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness (2 Peter 3:13). The time is coming when ALL men will pray to God and find favor with him. Man will come into God's presence with joy and be restored to his righteous state (Job 33:26, NIV).

How do we know this? The Bible says so! Isaiah eloquently stated the case: "As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it."—Isaiah 55:10,11, NIV

How long will we suffer? As long as God sees fit! "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."—2 Corinthians 4:17,18

Goodness

For Goodness' Sake

*For the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth.—
Ephesians 5:9, NAS*

Carl Hagensick

Goodness, like love, is hard to define. It has been described as "love in action." In the New Testament, "goodness" is a translation of two different Greek words, chrestotes, meaning moral excellence or usefulness, and agathosune, conveying the thought of uprightness of heart. In this respect, goodness is the sum of all the other graces.

Bishop Trench distinguishes between chrestotes and agathosune in that the former describes the kindlier aspects of "goodness," the latter includes also the sterner qualities by which doing "good" to others is not necessarily by gentle means. This type of goodness is not a passive, but an active grace. It was thus that the apostle Peter described Jesus as one who "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).

The Unobtainable Grace

When a rich ruler approached Jesus, calling him "Good Master," Jesus answered, "why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God." It is unclear whether Jesus was here denying his own essential goodness, or challenging the ruler to realize that if he used that epithet for Jesus, he must also recognize him as the Messiah. In either case, it is obvious that to be completely objectively good is above the capabilities of mortal man.

In the first chapter of Genesis the word "good" is used six times to describe God's evaluation of each progressive creative day. Here the sense of the word is "perfect." Thus "goodness" and "perfection" are closely related concepts. That which qualifies a work as perfect is revealed in Deuteronomy 32:4, "His work is perfect, for all his ways are just" (NAS).

Our goodness is only a reflection of God's goodness. This is borne out in 2 Thessalonians 1:11, "Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power."

Goodness and Mercy

It is reported that a child, returning from Sunday School class, told his mother that they studied the psalm about the sheep dogs. His mother queried which psalm that was. He

replied that it was the twenty-third Psalm. His mother asked where were the sheep dogs. His reply was that all shepherds have sheep dogs and the two of this shepherd were named Goodness and Mercy. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." (Psalms 23:6) These are companion attributes and, as good sheep dogs, companions of the great shepherd.

An equally close link can be found between "perfection" and "mercy" by comparing Matthew 5:48, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect" with its equivalent text in Luke 6:36, "Be ye merciful, as your Father also is merciful."

Which word did Jesus in fact use—perfect or merciful? Probably he used both—"be ye perfect, or mature, in your mercy as God is perfect in his mercy." The immediate preceding context in both passages is an exhortation to have love and mercy toward our enemies. Goodness, or perfection, then is particularly encouraged in the area of mercy toward others.

The Bond of Perfectness

In Colossians 3:14, love is called "the bond of perfectness." Love is not, in itself, perfection; but it is the bond which binds together all of the other graces to produce full maturity in Christ. Whether goodness or perfection call for the loving pat on the back or the harder slap a little lower, it will always be controlled by the spirit of love. The rebukes of goodness are always corrective, never punitive. The encouragements of goodness are always given with joy and never begrudgingly.

Love not only ties all the graces together into their sum of goodness, but it also ties together all who seek to attain this grace. In the words of the oft-quoted description of Messiah's kingdom, "love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart."

The Stern Face of Goodness

"Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off."—Romans 11:22

Goodness is not only merciful, but it also hews to the line of justice. When Jesus cleansed the temple of the money-changers, it was a good act, an exhibition of goodness. Yet it was not a gentle act. Goodness seeks the highest good, that which is beneficial to all and not focused on any single class or vested interest.

Goodness may manifest itself in admonitions to others. Notice the testimony of Romans 15:14, "And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another." However the goodness which admonishes must be accompanied by "all knowledge," and not based on speculation or hearsay testimony.

An example of this type of goodness in action can be seen in the words of the young man Elihu to the patriarch Job: "My words come from an upright heart; my lips sincerely speak what I know" (Job 33:3, NIV). This same thought is emphasized in our theme text from Ephesians 5:9 where goodness is joined with righteousness and truth.

Goodness, by definition, must be just and upright. Inasmuch as man, under sin, is considerably degraded, there are many times when goodness must act harshly in man's correction.

Summarizing the Bible's statements on goodness, therefore, we might describe it as that attribute which, under all conditions and in all circumstances, seeks to uphold the standards of God as the highest exemplification of that which is objectively good.

Achieving Goodness

Noting the premier quality of this fruit, how do we go about attaining it? One hint is given in Romans 12:10, "In honor preferring one another." It is natural in the human creature, due to its innate insecurities, to seek to find faults in others. Thus it seeks to make itself look good by comparison. Goodness will do the opposite. It will seek to find the virtues in another so that it may elevate the position of its fellow. Paul's counsel is, "in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (Philippians 2:3). Finding these virtues, goodness will cultivate association with the other, both to render the other service, and to emulate the graces which surpass one's own.

Another approach is copying the character of God, the very epitome of goodness. In the sermon on the mount, leading up to the climax of encouraging the Christian to be "perfect" as is the Father, Jesus demonstrates the character of God by a simple illustration: "he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."—Matthew 5:45

God knows no discrimination. The selfsame actions which bless the godly for their faithfulness, shame the ungodly, encouraging them to show their appreciation also. Perhaps this is well illustrated in a simple account in Genesis 4:7. After Cain and Abel had made their respective offerings, God said: "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." The word translated "sin" and "sin offering" is identical in the Hebrew. Thus the latter half of this text could with propriety read, "if thou doest not well, a sin-offering lies at the door, and it will come to you so that you may rule over it." The thought is suggested that Cain could well have, by observing God's goodness in accepting Abel's sacrifice, have copied his brother and been likewise accepted.*

We must develop an active concern for all the human race. "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10). While attention is drawn especially toward those of the household of faith, the admonition is to serve all humanity. This, after all, will be the

kingdom work of the faithful. This is the example of our Lord, who died for us "while we were yet sinners." (Romans 5:8)

While it is true that the Christian must avoid being drawn aside into present social uplift projects, neither can he ignore those who have deep problems with whom he comes in contact. This seems to be one of the strong lessons of the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10). In this parable we are given a specific location and direction of travel, "a certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho." Since the parable mentions specifically that the priest and Levite passed by "on the other side," they were perhaps going the opposite direction—from Jericho to Jerusalem. Since Jericho was near to one of the Levitical cities, Bezer (Joshua 20:8), the priest and Levite may have been going up to their assigned services in the temple in Jerusalem. As such, they had a logical reason for declining aid since a priest who touched a dead man was unclean and unfit for temple service for a period of time. This furnishes a forceful lesson that even spiritual claims on our time do not excuse us from the simple performance of acts of goodness to the helpless we may meet on the road of life.

While concentrating on the laws of righteousness, we should not be forgetful of the effects of sin and ignorance as mitigating circumstances for the decadent. Jesus spent much of his ministry in the homes of publicans and sinners, even befriending prostitutes. When the Pharisees berated him for what seemed to them as unseemly conduct, his reply was simple and to the point: "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick" (Matthew 9:12). On the other hand, in today's permissive society, there is a trend to excuse all sin as sickness. Here the severity of goodness must boldly call sin "sin," while at the same time being merciful and gentle toward the sinner.

This clear distinction between the wrongness of sin and the weakness of the sinner is noted by Elihu when, in chiding, he does not accuse Job of being unrighteous, but is content to make a specific statement against the sin: "Behold, in this thou art not just" (Job 33:12).

As a mountain climber may climb the tallest mountain simply because it is there, so goodness will provoke the Christian to acts of justice and kindness simply because the opportunities are there. Yea, it will do more, it will seek to make the opportunities available. It will never seek its own good, but always the greater good of the whole.

Such is the challenge we all face. So let us cultivate this grace and be active in it "for goodness' sake."

Faith

Increasing Our Faith

And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.—Luke 17:5

Homer Montague

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report." (Hebrews 11:1,2) The ancients who lived prior to the Christian era and largely walked alone, relying upon God's promises as their source of strength surely possessed faith. They were convinced that life's difficult experiences would result in their ultimate blessing even though generally they lacked close human fellowship and encouragement such as is enjoyed today by believers within an ecclesia setting.

Although the eleventh chapter of Hebrews records some very notable stalwarts of faith including Abel, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Moses among others, this listing ends with the reminder that they had not yet entered into their reward.

"And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."—Hebrews 11:36–40

The remarkable thing about these worthy ones of old is that as faithful as they were, since Christ had not yet provided the ransom, they did not receive the fulfillment of the earthly blessings promised for their obedience to the Heavenly Father. That must await the completion of the Gospel age church who have received the high calling to joint heirship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

In comparing our own experiences as spirit begotten sons of God with those servants of past ages, can we confidently claim that we are faithful to our covenant of sacrifice and that we really expect to be in the Body of Christ along with Paul, Stephen, Peter, James and all the other more than overcomers who have lived throughout this age?

The book of Hebrews was written to the early church for the purpose of helping them understand the dispensational change which had occurred and that believers were not under the law covenant but under grace. The eleventh chapter of this book is an exhortation to Christian faith based upon the examples given by righteous individuals who lived during Old Testament times. In the early days of the church there was great opposition towards believers, especially against those Jewish converts who had accepted

Christ. Yet that very persecution was instrumental in scattering the brethren so that the good news was being spread in accordance with the Heavenly Father's design.

An important lesson we can gain from studying the book of Hebrews is that true faith will manifest itself in the demonstration of love and obedience towards God. This thought is also confirmed elsewhere in the scriptures as we read: "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born [begotten] of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."—1 John 5:3,4

Faith and Works

Another writer emphasizes the need for doing acceptable works to demonstrate sincerity of faith. "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works."—James 2:17,18

As an indicator of our appreciation to the Heavenly Father for his marvelous grace in accepting us through Christ, we should engage in activities that will help us increase the fruit of faith. Four such areas are the exercise of faith through doctrine, self-denial, service and prayer.

Doctrine

In the area of doctrine, it is necessary that we take time to study the word of God. There are many demands and commitments in our everyday lives which could occupy much of our time in satisfying our earthly needs. Faithfulness will demand that we scrutinize our actions and seek to minimize the use of consecrated moments devoted to other matters and instead, utilize such time for personal Bible study so that we can be more rooted and grounded in the faith. Today in the workplace, much is said about cutbacks and greater productivity. Jobs are being eliminated and increased demands are being placed upon workers who remain to be more efficient. Similar time management procedures are necessary in our spiritual lives so that we do not neglect the regular feeding upon God's word for strength to keep us sound in the faith. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."—2 Timothy 2:15

We should utilize helps provided in the Harvest Message to assist us in rightly dividing the word of truth. Consistent use of the volumes, Tabernacle Shadows, reprints and other similar aids will enable us to have a harmonious understanding of present truth. We are aware that certain prophetic matters are unfolding even before our eyes and many brethren have written and spoken about such topics as they observe current events. Our familiarity with the general outline of the plan of the ages will provide us with a firm background to evaluate the likelihood that certain events will be fulfilled in accordance with such projections.

Self-Denial

Regarding faithfulness through self denial, the first step is to seek to know and do God's will instead of our own. The model for this was Jesus as we read: "Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." (Psalm 40:7,8)

If we look to the Bible for scriptural principles to guide us, we will know God's will for us. Unquestionably, we must have an attitude of submission to endure whatever self denial may cost us, realizing that faithfulness in this matter will help to work out within us the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

Additionally, we need to be circumspect and avoid earthly entanglements wherever possible. There are many potential distractions to keep us from bending our energies towards maintaining this sacrificial course. These would include the good things that are pleasing to the eye, pleasant to the flesh and things to which every human has a right. Perhaps one of the simplest guides that we can use to determine what we should or should not do is by asking ourselves whether certain experiences we desire enhance the new creature or simply satisfy our flesh. If they promote our spirituality, we are surely doing what merits God's approval. "All things are lawful but not all things are beneficial, all things are lawful, but not all things build up, so whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do everything for the Glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:23,31).

A final suggestion under this category is to faithfully utilize our monetary resources in God's service. We are stewards of the Lord's money and after providing things needful and decent for those who are dependent upon us, to the extent possible, we should employ such funds for spiritual purposes. We are not to lay up treasures for ourselves here on earth.

Service

Faithfulness through service can take many forms. "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10).

Our general helpfulness to others in need ought to be a hallmark of our character. Friends and neighbors who know us should see this quality manifested in our lives even if they do not appreciate our doctrine. Efforts at sharing the good news of the kingdom is a prime evidence of doing good.

In addition to participating regularly in ecclesia activities, we might assist others of the brotherhood who are engaged in special projects. We can visit, pray for and send comfort messages to the afflicted. Some of the Lord's children are so busy serving his cause, one might wonder how they find the time to do everything. We should always remember that he who is faithful in that which is least will be granted additional opportunities for service.

Prayer

Our final area to consider is faithfulness through prayer. One of the greatest privileges afforded to believers is access to the Heavenly Father through prayer. Coming often and tarrying at the throne of grace are indispensable to our Christian development as we seek scriptural instructions as to what should be the nature of our petitions.

We read, for example, "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matthew 6:11). Acting upon this text would be an evidence of our confidence in the Heavenly Father. He surely will grant what is needful for us. This refers to those things which are necessary for our sustenance, not a superabundance, although in many cases, particularly in our own country, we have been blessed so greatly we must be careful of not becoming dissatisfied with anything that has not been provided.

The Bible indicates, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1John 1:9) It is our privilege to go to the throne of grace frequently, seeking forgiveness for what we do that is not pleasing and even for those things of which we are unaware, our secret faults. This will help us become very sensitive to purity, truth, righteousness and the doing of the Father's will.

How wise and loving is our God in responding to our proper petitions. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"—Luke 11:13

Since we want to see the fruitage of the holy spirit demonstrated in our activities, our prayer requests should be along these lines. After having asked the Lord for his blessings in this manner, we need to exercise ourselves in ways which are pleasing to him, through fellowship, study and careful scrutiny of our thoughts, words and deeds, to the intent that we will be pure in our hearts.

We should remember our brethren at the throne of grace as the apostle admonished. "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds." (Colossians 4:2,3) This means we should pray for our brethren in their efforts of spreading the gospel, as well as prospering other activities in their capacity as servants of God. Prayers which seek only self interests could not be acceptable to the Heavenly Father, for we are all part of one body.

One of the advanced evidences of discipleship was given by our Master. "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." (Matthew 5:44) When we can do this heartily, without rancor, bitterness, vindictiveness or railing in our being, we surely will have reached a most favorable standing with our Lord. Such was the kind of love that the Master had for all mankind, as he gave his life willingly, even for his enemies who opposed him and who in God's kingdom after their awakening will be ashamed and mourn because they will see the one whom they pierced. Will we as

followers of Christ leave such a legacy that we truly were walking with God and also did not retaliate against our enemies?

True faith implies a conviction of the things which God has revealed about himself and then acting in accordance with those beliefs. The faithfulness of Old Testament saints under extremely adverse conditions should inspire us to act in accordance with our professions, bearing in mind that those who ultimately will be united in helping to bless all the families of the earth with our exalted King of kings, are "called and chosen and faithful." (Revelation 17:14)

Temperance

Ruling One's Spirit

He that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city.—Proverbs 16:32

The growth of debauchery, drug abuse and tolerance for the fancied rights of others has placed the Christian in an environment of temptations. In traditional Christian art, a woman holding a bridle and reins personifies the virtue of temperance. This may provide a picture to our minds of what temperance really is. It is self-control (ASV), self-restraint (New Testament by Henry Alford), self-mastery (Barclay) of our minds and character in all areas of development.

Temperance, Self-control, Discipline

In a recent lecture, one elder offered the following observation: "Discipline is controlled thinking, controlled emotions, controlled habits, controlled speech, controlled study, controlled activities, controlled fellowship, controlled prayer, controlled tempers, controlled judgments, controlled truth perceptions, controlled in every case by the holy spirit. Without discipline there would be little change or improvement. The Lord wants to mold the soft and pliable qualities we possess into the likeness of his Son. Without discipline these qualities will become calcified and misshapen. Soon these qualities, if we are not disciplined, will bear the image of the old man and not the image of the heavenly pattern that is put before us. The longer we delay in this discipline the harder it is to fit into the Christ-mold."

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."—Romans 8:13

The quality of the new nature's character is in direct proportion to the commitment to discipline and self-control.

"This I can pray with confidence, for his divine power has gifted us with everything necessary for life and godliness, because we have come to know him who called us to share his own glory and excellence. And this is the very reason why you must make up your minds to make every effort to equip your faith with virtue, your virtue with knowledge, your knowledge with self-mastery, your self-mastery with fortitude, your fortitude with godliness, your godliness with Christian friendliness; your friendliness with love. For if you possess these virtues, and if you keep on growing in them, it will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive on your road to an even deeper knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. If any virtues are lacking in a man's life, he is blind and short-sighted, and has forgotten that his life has been cleansed from the sins that once defiled it. Brothers, you must be all the more eager to confirm the fact that you have been called and chosen. If you live like this, you will never collapse on the march, for then the

way into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will open even more generously to you."—2 Peter 1:3-11, Barclay

Coaching Encouragement

Earlier in his walk, the apostle Peter was given a very special commission, "Strengthen thy brethren" (Luke 22:32). As word spread of the persecution under Nero, it must have sent a shudder of terror among the Christian communities in the provinces of the Roman Empire. To strengthen his brethren, Peter wrote his first letter. But now a new enemy was endangering the church and Peter needed to address this directly. This new enemy was closer to home in the form of false teachers. Trials, disciplines, testing, falling away, greed, exploitation, false words, and secretly introduced heresies were near at hand. In the small community of brethren where love was the theme, storm clouds were gathering to try and test each one. Only the strong and prepared ones would stand victorious when it was all over. The best preparation for meeting such opposition is a well disciplined attitude. It was time to remind them once again.

"This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder." (2 Peter 3:1) It was time to gird up their minds once again. (1 Peter 1:13) In those days when flowing robes were worn, girdles were used for two purposes: 1) They kept garments in their proper place, away from hindering work that was being done; and 2) they were an aid when fortifying strength while lifting heavy burdens, much as weightlifters wear special belts. Not only would the girdle prevent someone from tripping, it allowed more work to be accomplished with less fatigue or danger of injury. "Gird up the loins of your mind." Discipline was needed to bring the thoughts of the mind back into the right track. It also meant that activity was anticipated. You wouldn't gird yourself to rest, but when you have decided to take on a task requiring work and effort. The Christian task is never easy.

The Whip of a Resolute Will

"The action of the mind should be kept under control. When the thoughts begin to wander, it is time to whip them into order. A resolute will will do it. Every true disciple has often found that the work he took up painfully from a sense of duty became to him a source of joy. On this path are the shining footprints of the Master." (R977)

Peter knew what suffering was like. He had been in prison. Peter knew what it was like to experience betrayal. He witnessed Judas betraying the Master. Peter knew how the mind could turn the closest of friends into denying such friendships when times were tough. Oh, he knew, all too well, the bitter weeping and agony which he had experienced first hand.

Peter was there when our Lord agonized in the garden as the high priest's men were about to arrive. He was probably informed of the words of Jesus in prayer as he anticipated the suffering that was ahead. Jesus asked if it were possible for this cup to pass from him, but nevertheless, "not my will, but thine be done" (Luke 22:42).

Very few people get through life without a good deal of suffering of one kind or another: physical suffering, mental suffering or heart suffering. One of the strange ways of providence is that many have to suffer in the very way in which they would rather not suffer. There is comfort in the example of Jesus' suffering. There is comfort in the assurance that when God is bearing down extra hard, it is to bring out the best aspects of our character, to refine the gold, tried in fire. As Paul observed, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5).

A well-respected Christian banker was asked what would be the best investment for the Christian. He pondered the question a moment and finally said, "Invest in gold." The response was a little unusual. Surely other investments like McDonald's or Microsoft held a better return than gold. Then the banker explained his answer: "Invest in gold tried in the fire." Christian character needs our attention. Discipline and self-control are to be the focus. The quality of the new nature's character demands an active purging of the dross and a willingness to submit to the heat necessary to refine the character.

Temperance: Love in Training

Temperance is the self-control and discipline that applies love to our daily actions. Such discipline can relieve suffering in the Church. Peter knew that with trouble ahead, the brethren would need each other. Peter applied such discipline in his life. He encouraged the brethren to be hospitable. "Be hospitable to each other, without murmurings" (1 Peter 4:9). This love in training is not something that is instantly developed. It grows. Those who have some today, may have more of it tomorrow, still more of it in a year; for it is a matter of development.

Peter had a home in Capernaum (Matthew 8:14) where Jesus stayed when in the area. Peter was one of the apostles sent to prepare the Passover feast. It was Peter's home that was opened to Paul's visit for 15 days while in Jerusalem (Luke 22:8; Galatians 1:18). Beck translates verse 9, "Welcome one another as guests without grumbling."

Paul supports this in 2 Corinthians 9:7,12: "Everyman according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God."

When brethren feel welcome, it can counteract the feeling of loneliness. Hospitality can relieve suffering and strengthen the bond of brotherhood. In the atmosphere of hospitality, matters of the heart and the truth can be discussed. Comfort and encouragement as well as mutual support and correction will abound in such arrangements.

"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister let him do it as of the ability which God giveth" (1 Peter 4:11). What brethren say can make a difference. It can counter the adverse affects of false teachings and this is what Peter was

warning the brethren about in his epistle. Many false teachings could have been nipped in the bud early on had discussion and dialogue been encouraged.

"But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings."—
Jeremiah 23:22

Speaking as the oracles of God, exercising the truth when we meet together, can fortify the brethren. It takes discipline. It takes self-control to make an effort to meet together when the flesh would prefer other choices. Whenever the flesh gets in the way, it is time to whip it into order. Every true disciple has often found that the work he took up painfully from a sense of duty became to him a source of joy.

Letting Go

Peter knew the testing period that lay ahead for the brethren. The test would come in subtle forms and maybe not so subtle approaches, but with direct challenges, all with the one end in mind—to encourage the brethren to let go and give up.

Peter could recall his own experience. Shortly after the Master had died the apostles were perplexed as to what they should do. The Master's resurrection inspired them with hope, but they didn't know what direction to pursue. Jesus had appeared to the disciples a few times, but then they did not see him for many days. They became discouraged and said, "There is no use waiting; I will go fishing." Two others said, "We will go with thee." They were about to go into the fishing business and leave the work of fishing for men. This was a testing time for the disciples. Peter recognized that this test would come to the brethren at the hands of scoffers, trying to pry the flock away from the fold and back into the business of the world.

Peter remembered an experience one day in Capernaum. Our Lord had been preaching to a large group of disciples (John 6:60) but the message was difficult for them to accept. Many walked away never again to follow the Master.

"From that time on many of his disciples turned back and no longer remained with him. 'Do you too want to go away?' Jesus said to the twelve. 'Master, who could we go to? You have the words of eternal life, and we are convinced and sure that you are God's Holy One.'"—John 6:66–69, Barclay

The one who replied to Jesus' inquiry was Peter. After tasting of the delicious feast which the Lord has provided, where else would we go and expect to find anything better? We would starve spiritually if we went to any other than the Lord's table. We know not where else to go. Peter wanted to instill this very same response in the hearts of the brethren not only then, but also down at this end of the age. He knew that he would not be there to answer every doubt or fear, so he encouraged the elders to carry the responsibility.

"The elders who are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed; Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."—1 Peter 5:1–4

Peter gives the elders the same commission that Jesus had given to him earlier in his ministry, "Feed the flock." Tend the flock as a shepherd tends to the sheep. The responsibility of an elder not only sets the tone for the flock, but also to "Exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict."—Titus 1:9

When trials come, they are going to be as unexpected as can be; they are going to come from unexpected sources; they are going to manifest themselves in unexpected ways and they are going to be accompanied by other unexpected incidents in your life. Have the right intention, the right motive, the right desire in heart when these trials come. It was the apostle Peter's desire to prepare the church for these difficult times by stressing the need of temperance, self-control and discipline so that we can stand.

"For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Peter 1:8, NAS

Meekness

The Meekness of Wisdom

Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.—James 3:13

Meekness, humility, and gentleness are triplets, but they are not identical triplets. Humility is at the base of the trio. It describes the recognition of one's inadequacies and the need for help. As such, it is the foundation stone of Christian character, the first of the Lord's beatitudes in his sermon on the mount, where it is given as "blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3). It is not until the third beatitude, after passing the milestone of mourning for one's undone position, that meekness is introduced (Matthew 5:5). It objectively notices the good traits of others and thus, in some manner at least, esteems others as better than itself. (Philippians 2:3)

Meekness defines a condition of heart and mind that is willing to learn how to improve one's condition. It differs from gentleness in that gentleness marks the actions of those who have the inward spirit of meekness.

The Gentleness of Meekness

In the New Testament, this fruit of the spirit is often combined with the resultant actions of gentleness. The following texts demonstrate this relationship. "Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you" (2 Corinthians 10:1); "What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?" (1 Corinthians 4:21); "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1); "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (2 Timothy 2:25); "To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men" (Titus 3:2).

Because the meek individual knows well his own faults and failings, he is considerate of the same in others. This produces that gentle disposition which uses compassionate consideration when remonstrating with another. Not only does a meek person seek to learn those things which will help him live a life more approved of God, he will desire to share what he learns with fellow pilgrims in the narrow way. Recognizing how difficult it is to personally change old and established habits, he does not seek to force another to change more radically and quickly.

In the book of Job, the approach of Elihu stands out in marked contrast to that of the three "miserable comforters." While their reproaches are harsh and condemnatory, Elihu prefaces his with a sympathetic appreciation of Job's plight. Notice the prelude to his justified criticism of Job's words.

He invites a rebuttal to his words of exhortation: "If thou canst answer me, set thy words in order, stand up" (Job 33:5).

He only speaks when he feels certain that he is invited to do so: "Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead" (Job 33:6).

He claims no superiority to Job: "I also am formed out of the clay" (Job 33:6).

He assures Job that his critical words will be kindly given: "Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee" (Job 33:7).

He uses no hearsay accusations: "Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words" (Job 33:8).

His charges are specific, not general. After quoting Job's words back to him, he does not call Job a bad man but contents himself with saying, "Behold, in this thou art not just" (Job 33:12).

The Meekness of Wisdom

Our theme text combines meekness and wisdom. It is wisdom which dictates the manner in which one addresses another. In Hebrews 10:24 we are admonished to "consider one another to provoke unto love and good works."

The word translated "consider" is a compound of the Greek *noeo* (Strong's 3539), meaning to ponder with the prepositional prefix *kata*, which serves to intensify the verb. It indicates a thorough and careful consideration of the other person. All too frequently Christians respond to one another "off the cuff," without due consideration to the effect that the words used will have on the other. The one who has developed a meek spirit will demonstrate that spirit with compassionate and gentle words.

In a more personal vein, the apostle Peter has wise counsel to husbands in 1 Peter 3:7: "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered." The familiarity that the marital state generates often carries the side effect of a lack of consideration for the feelings of one's partner. Peter does not here stress the man's role of headship but, in contrast, a recognition that both partners are "heirs together of the grace of life." Peter's advice is reminiscent of the Jewish proverb that God did not make woman from man's head that she should rule over him, or from his foot that he should trample upon her, but from his side, under his arm and close to his heart, so that he could be her protector and her beloved.

In a similar vein Paul admonishes, "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Ephesians 4:15).

Try the Spirits

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1John 4:1).

Meekness not only governs a Christian's conduct toward others, it also controls the manner of one's personal growth in truth and grace. Bookstores are full of self-help books covering every personal category from being a more positive person to overcoming dependencies and co-dependencies of every addiction known to man. These particularly proliferate in Christian bookstores. All such materials are well-meaning, but all are not equally good. The only book that carries all the answers on how to improve the quality of one's life is the Bible. All other references are good only if they adhere to the principles of scripture because the only one fully qualified to outline the principles of godly living is God himself. It is only as he has revealed these principles to the authors of the Bible or demonstrated them in the saintly lives contained therein that we can comprehend the true desire he has for us to live the Christian life.

Yet many good and noble people have the Bible. Many have sought to decode its secrets for the life of Christlikeness. Why, then, does their counsel so often differ? The apostle Paul suggests the reason in 1 Corinthians 2:11: "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." Unless one has been begotten with the holy spirit of God one cannot fully comprehend the depths of spiritual things.

Of course we are not counseling against the reading of material which may be helpful in digesting the biblical concepts for righteous living. We are suggesting due caution in such reading, recognizing the fallibility of the authors.

There is good advice in the three simple steps suggested by Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:20,21: "Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." In the early church there were many who either had or claimed to have the gift of prophecy. Paul admonished that they be attentively listened to and that the listener precede to step two: proving whether the words of the prophesying are supported by the revealed word of God—the Old Testament to the early church, both the Old and New Testaments to the later church. After doing so, the truths comprehended are to be applied and held fast.

An example of this principle in action was in the church in the city of Berea. We read of them in Acts 17:11: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

Meekness, An Active Grace

Meekness is not passive. It is active. It is not an empty mind waiting to be filled. It embodies the active search for truth. In this way it relates to the fourth beatitude, the one that follows meekness and flows as a natural result of it. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6).

In the sermon on the mount, Jesus suggests a three-fold way to successfully satisfy one's hunger and thirst for righteousness. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matthew 7:7). The three verbs used here—asking, seeking, knocking—are not to be taken synonymously but progressively.

The first verb, "to ask," describes that basic humility which precedes meekness. Professor Vine says this word, *aiteo*, "frequently suggests the attitude of a suppliant, the petition of one who is lesser in position than he to whom the petition is made." It is often correctly translated by context as "desire" or "beg."

In contrast, the word for "seek" implies an active search. It is used frequently of mental concepts and requires meditation and deep consideration of the ideas put forth.

The third word, "knock," conveys the thought of incessant rapping on the door and implies importunity. The adage is well put that says, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again."

Meekness is not timid. Meekness is bold in its search for truth. It is willing both to beg and to dig for truth as one searches for rare jewels. And then it incessantly continues in its search, willing to put doubts on the shelf for future resolution, but not giving up in the search for that resolution.

"Truth, like a modest little flower in the wilderness of life, is surrounded and almost choked by the luxuriant growth of the weeds of error. If you would find it, you must be ever on the lookout. If you would see its beauty, you must brush aside the weeds of error and the brambles of bigotry. If you would possess it, you must stoop to get it. Be not content with one flower of truth. Had one been sufficient there would have been no more. Weave them together as a garland—'bind them upon thee as a bride doeth.' 'Bind them about thy neck; write them upon the tables of thine heart; so shalt thou find favor and understanding in the sight of God and man.'" (Reprints, page 9)

Meekness in the Old Testament

The Hebrew word for meekness conveys a far different thought than its Greek counterpart. The Hebrew *anaw*, according to the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, is from a root meaning "suffering," "oppressed," or "afflicted" and is translated "meekness" to show the desired spirit to be produced under such afflictions. It is translated "poor" in such passages as Job 24:4 and Amos 8:4.

Numbers 12:3 takes on a different shade of meaning in light of this definition. There we read, "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." These words may be describing Moses as "most oppressed" or "most stressed" because of the burden of his leadership position, a thought not generally seen in English translations of the Hebrew.

However, in many of the Old Testament references, the emphasis is not on the hardship of experience, but on that character which the hardships produced. Here lies an important lesson for the Christian. Hardships and trials, even when such may be the result of chastisement, are only valuable if they produce a character that is eager to learn the appropriate lessons.

Some passages where this thought of oppression with its resultant meek character include: "When God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth" (Psalms 76:9); "The LORD lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground" (Psalms 147:6); "For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation" (Psalms 149:4).

The lesson to be gained from the Old Testament is that it is not the cause of an oppressive experience, but what one gains from it, that determines whether it is merely a hardship or can be classified as an experience of meekness.

Such fruitage of the spirit is to be diligently sought. If trials are needed to produce it, such trials are welcome. As one has well said, "Do not waste your trials, they are worth millions." A precious promise to some who seek this kind of meekness is given in Zephaniah 2:3: "Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD's anger."

May the quest for meekness remain one of the highest priorities for every Christian, for "the meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way" (Psalms 25:9).

Gentleness

Spiritual Clothing

To put off, according to the former course of life, that old man, corrupted by deceitful desires; and to be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and be you clothed with that new man, who, according to God, has been formed in righteousness and holiness of the truth.—Ephesians 4:22–24, Diaglott

Tom Ruggirello

Clothing is the external covering of our bodies used to protect us, keep us warm, and to hide our nakedness. When the apostle Paul admonishes the Christian to "be clothed with the new man," he is suggesting a spiritual approach to covering ourselves. He contrasts the new man with the old man who is corrupted by deceitful desires. This implies that the new creature is kept uncorrupted by pure desires. Everything a Christian does should be driven by pure desires to serve and please God. This is the "root" out of which all goodness can grow.

Gentleness is part of the spiritual clothing we wear. Clothing comes in contact with others. Thus we could consider gentleness as that part of our spiritual clothing that comes in contact with others. Gentleness describes the manner in which a Christian deals with others. Vine's dictionary compares meekness and gentleness this way: "[Meekness] describes a condition of mind and heart, whereas gentleness is appropriate rather to actions." Vine goes on to a fuller definition of gentleness: "[Gentleness is] fair, forbearing, not insisting on the letter of the law; it expresses that considerateness that looks humanely and reasonably at the facts of a case — sweet reasonableness."

An Example of Gentleness

In 1 Thessalonians 2:7,8 we have an example of how this beautiful quality was used by the apostle Paul in his relationship with the brethren. He writes: "But we were gentle in the midst of you; even as a nursing mother would cherish her own children. Thus yearning over you, we were content, not only to have imparted to you the glad tidings of God, but also our own lives, because you had become endeared to us." (Diaglott)

Paul uses the example of a nursing mother who cherishes her children to describe his gentleness with the brethren. The word translated "cherish" can also be translated "to foster with tender care." What more caring and sympathetic example could Paul have used than a nursing mother? He wasn't just interested in presenting the gospel message to the church at Corinth, he was also vitally concerned for their ongoing growth. The source of such gentle dealing is a caring and concerned heart, like that of a parent.

Paul's role as a spiritual parent is elaborated in verses 11 and 12: "As you know how we exhorted and comforted you, as a father each one of his own children, and warned you to

walk worthily of that God who is inviting you into his own glorious kingdom." (Diaglott) Paul holds a special place in the church, not only for his inspired teaching of the gospel, but for his untiring care and compassion for the brethren. His tender, loving care was an example worthy of our scrutiny and emulation.

The Need for Gentleness Among Leaders

In 2 Timothy 2:24–26 the apostle again mentions the importance of gentleness when instructing others. He says: "A servant of the Lord must not be contentious, but be gentle toward all, fit to teach, patient under evil; in meekness correcting the opposers; perhaps God may give them a change of mind in order to a knowledge of the truth, and that they may be recovered from the snare of the enemy, who have been entrapped by him for his pleasure." (Diaglott)

We see here a contrast being made between strife and gentleness. Notice that Paul does not say that we should avoid all controversies. In the preceding verse (vs. 23) he said to reject all foolishness. This, of course, requires an analysis of controversy so that the correct position can be understood. Paul then suggests that any correction be done with meekness and gentleness.

Though the apostle's instructions here are made to all servants of the Lord, they most apply to anyone in a leadership position. Because of the more prominent and influential position of elders, they are especially responsible for making sure that their correction of others is done with meekness and gentleness. "Standing for truth" is very important, but those who claim to stand for truth could cause more harm than good because of the way they do it. When correction comes from the heart and is motivated by love, it will pass the lips differently than when a contentious spirit is driving the words out. What a blessing there is in a soft answer, a gentle rebuke. It is designed for the uplifting and good of the hearer, not to ease the conscience of the corrector that he has taken his stand for truth. Gentleness is defined as "considerateness that looks humanely and reasonably at the facts of a case, that deals with sweet reasonableness." If this is conveyed in words of correction, then the correction has a greater likelihood of being properly received.

Jesus' Gentleness with Peter

After Jesus' death the apostles had returned to their secular work. Without Jesus they had lost their direction and focus. The apostle Peter was especially struggling because of his denial of Jesus shortly before his death. Our Lord's gentle handling of Peter was the key to recovering him from the guilt and discouragement that had ensnared him. If Jesus had bitterly denounced him for his cowardice, it is unlikely that Peter would ever have returned to the service of the church. By gently nurturing his love he soon became the courageous apostle that he had been before, and in the process taught a valuable lesson to all.

When elders are gentle in their presentation of truth, there is a calming effect on the brethren. When we individually interact with brethren who have done wrong, or do not

understand a doctrine correctly, the example of Jesus and Paul should be in our minds. All individual Christians should remember that they have a personal responsibility in seeking the uplifting and blessing of those around them, especially those of the household of faith. It is important to uphold truth while at the same time contributing to the peace of Zion.

The Christian approach to helping others is to be correct in what one says, wise in the words one chooses, and gentle in the way one speaks.

NEWS AND VIEWS

Pastoral Bible Institute News

PBI Annual Report

The past year has been another blessed one in the Lord's service for the Pastoral Bible Institute. Over the 79 years of its existence, the PBI has sought to meet its primary purpose of strengthening the hands of the brotherhood. The chief tool to this end has been The Herald magazine. The journal has now entered its eightieth year of continuous publication.

Judging from the responses we receive from readers, there continues to be high appreciation for the thematic approach of The Herald. This approach will continue at least for the remainder of this year.

Each issue also continues to carry a wide assortment of current events in our News and Views section, as well as news from the Institute, letters to the journal, and frequent book reviews. Reader response has been positive for the continuation of this feature.

While our subscription list remains modest, somewhat less than a thousand subscribers, we hope to increase that number in the coming year. To that end we are planning a full page ad in Christian History magazine. We also want to encourage our subscribers to either recommend or enter subscriptions for acquaintances who may benefit from the message of the journal. The magazine continues to also be available on audio cassette tape and over the internet on our web page at www.heraldmag.org.

We plan to offer a computer CD-ROM with a large selection of past articles from the pages of The Herald as well as all the writings of Pastor Russell and several dozen other books and papers by Bible Students. It will be titled, "The Bible Students Library" and will be available by the first of the year.

Another aspect of the Institute's work has been in the publication of books and booklets. The book "The Revelation of Jesus Christ" by former editor R. E. Streeter has been joined this year with the republishing of another book by the same author, "Daniel, the Beloved of Jehovah."

In the area of booklets, the directors of the Institute have decided to distribute what they judge to be the best booklets on various subjects regardless of publisher. This has seen the offering of several new booklets during the past year and we anticipate there will be others in the future.

We continue to look forward to being of service for the encouragement and upbuilding of the household of faith. We welcome constructive criticism and input from all our readers that the work of the Lord may be carried out in a manner that brings honor and glory to the name of our Father in heaven.

The Directors of The Pastoral Bible Institute

Letters

Perhaps this has been sent to the wrong address. If so, I truly apologize for any inconvenience it causes you. The brain is certainly an awesome mechanism, but forgetfulness seems to have overtaken me to some degree. Since we are so far from the perfection our first parents enjoyed, I do believe this condition is normal since we are told that even the dear apostles forgot! (Matt. 16:5; Mark 8:14) Notice how our Lord comforts and encourages us in ALL things! And we know that His grace is proportionate to our short-comings! Blessed Savior!

Things are moving so rapidly among the nations now—all according to His perfect will and way. It is thrilling to witness God's glorious plan and to think on the marvelous future prospects which lie ahead for the unending ages.

Leonora H. DeShane, Tennessee

Around the World

The risks of kidnapping of executives working abroad is increasing, according to recent security publications. In Central and South America, in South Africa, Yemen, Nigeria and Somalia, kidnapping has increased substantially in the last year. Serious problems are emerging in Russia and the commonwealth of Independent States. The worst affected region is the northern Caucasus, where there were 800 kidnappings last year. The style of kidnapping varies between regions. In some countries, people are released quickly; in others, such as Colombia, the average length of incarceration is 11 to 14 months, and can last three years. Ransoms are paid in a very high number of incidents.

—Financial Times, 6/30/98

About a dozen graves have been vandalized at a Jewish cemetery just outside Moscow. Reporters saw tombstones defaced with anti-Semitic graffiti. A white-spray inscription on one of them said: "Death to Jews!" The cemetery is run by a Moscow synagogue which suffered serious damage in a bomb attack last month. President Boris Yeltsin warned in a radio address that a worrisome neo-Nazi trend was emerging in Russia and urged Russians to prevent its spread. "We are very grateful to the president for a call to act against the spread of neo-Nazism. But so far there is no action," Rabbi Berel Lazar of the Marina Roshcha synagogue told Reuters Television. The hardships of economic reforms launched after the communist super-power collapsed in 1991 and a lack of liberal traditions have created conditions for ultra-nationalism to prosper and radical groups, including neo-Nazis, to flourish. The foreign community in Moscow has been alarmed by a series of recent attacks on people of African and Asian origin, and over the years since communism collapsed, the rise of some far-right politicians has raised fears of an ultra-nationalist regime.

—Reuters, 6/29/98

Israel

The US will not be able to continue its support of Israel in the United Nations, and Washington has Middle East interests other than Israel, Ma'Ariv reports US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright as telling PM Benjamin Netanyahu during a telephone conversation. Albright reportedly said the US would probably not be able to veto UN Security Council decisions regarding Israeli plans to expand the boundaries of Jerusalem. "Israel is not the exclusive American interest in the Middle East," she is quoted as telling Netanyahu. Ma'Ariv notes that, according to political observers, Albright's statements were unprecedented, and were partly due to Washington's declining status in the Arab world. At the same time, Albright has apparently asked PLO Chairman Arafat to stop recent PLO activities at the United Nations. The PLO is attempting to have its observer status upgraded to that of a near-state, a move Israel calls a clear violation of the Oslo accords.

— IC Eastern Journal, 6/29/98

A delegation of the Vatican visited the PLO Authority (PA) autonomous areas and met with Yasser Arafat. The delegation, led by Vatican Undersecretary of State Monsignor Celestino Mighore, participated in the second of the Holy See-PA joint committee which is working to negotiate an agreement between the two sides. The first meeting took place in the Vatican in April. Mr. Arafat has held six meetings with Pope John Paul II, who has spoken out often on the need for Israel and the PA to push ahead with peace.

— Israel Wie, 6/29/98

Discovery of 2,000-year-old cave burials in Israel is lending credence to the legend of the Maccabees, a tribe of Jewish warriors whose revolt against Syrian kings is celebrated in Hanukka festivals. Road work northwest of Jerusalem uncovered the cave containing 24 ossuaries, or stone boxes containing the bones of the dead. Inscriptions on the ossuaries indicate the name of one of the clans of the Maccabees. This find is the first physical evidence of the Maccabees, known previously only through ancient Jewish writings.

—The Missing Link, The Journal of Topical Anthropology [date unknown]

In a gesture of support for the Palestinians, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Mussa said that Egypt headed the list of countries that support the declaration of an independent Palestinian state. Mussa told the pro-government Egyptian weekly magazine *Al-Messawer* that he expects Palestinian President Yassir Arafat to declare a state according to the timetable agreed upon with the Israelis in the Oslo accords five years ago, which is the end of talks on final agreement in May 1999. "There is no way that the Palestinians will be deprived of this legitimate right," he said.

—Associated Press, 6/24/98

Israeli security sources are reportedly concerned by Russia's recent sale of Cornet AT-X-14 anti-tank missiles to Syria. The missiles are a significant improvement to the capabilities of the Syrian army. The Syrians reportedly purchased 1,000 Cornets, which have a range of 3.5 miles. The sale ends a nine-year hiatus in weapons transfers between the two countries, and is an example of what appears to be new Russian assertiveness in exporting arms to the Middle East. Both Iran and Iraq are potential recipients of Russian weaponry

—Jane's Defense Weekly, Ha'aretz

The Arab League strongly condemned Israel's plan to extend Jerusalem municipal boundaries. Representatives of 22 Arab countries agreed to undertake international moves to put pressure on Israel to reverse the plan. Palestinians demand that East Jerusalem, occupied by Israel in 1967, become the capital of their future state. But Israel, saying that Jerusalem has a special status in Jewish religion, must remain as its "united and eternal capital." Arab League Secretary-General Esmat Abdel-meguid said he expected nations to pressure Israel not only through statements, but also by taking concrete measures "to deliver a message to Israel that its policies are rejected and it will face a lot of problems on the international level. If [Netanyahu] is asking for violence, he will face it." He added that Arab countries are now seriously considering renewing tight economic boycott measures against Israel.

— Deutsche Press Agentur (DPA), 6/25/98

Islam

Editor's note: In view of the peace discussions going on between the PA and Israel, we thought it might be helpful to publish excerpts from the PLO Charter which is so controversial. Yasser Arafat has refused to delete these passages from the charter saying that it really doesn't apply. Words in bold are the sensitive parts Israel wants deleted.

Article 19: The partition of Palestine in 1947 and the establishment of the state of Israel are entirely illegal, regardless of the passage of time, because they were contrary to the will of the Palestinian people and to their natural right in their homeland, and inconsistent with the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly the right to self-determination.

Article 20: The Balfour declaration, the mandate for Palestine, and everything that has been based upon them, are deemed null and void. Claims of historical or religious ties of Jews with Palestine are incompatible with the facts of history and the true conception of what constitutes statehood. Judaism, being a religion, is not an independent nationality. Nor do Jews constitute a single nation with an identity of its own; they are citizens of the states to which they belong.

Article 21: The Arab Palestinian people, expressing themselves by the armed Palestinian revolution, reject all solutions which are substitutes for the total liberation of Palestine

and reject all proposals aiming at the liquidation of the Palestinian problem, or its internationalization.

Article 22: Zionism is a political movement organically associated with international imperialism and antagonistic to all action for liberation and to progressive movements in the world. It is racist and fanatic in its nature, aggressive, expansionist, and colonial in its aims, and fascist in its methods. Israel is the instrument of the Zionist movement, and geographical base for world imperialism placed strategically in the midst of the Arab homeland to combat the hopes of the Arab nation for liberation, unity, and progress. Israel is a constant source of threat vis-à-vis peace in the Middle East and the whole world. Since the liberation of Palestine will destroy the Zionist and imperialist presence and will contribute to the establishment of peace in the middle east, the Palestinian people look for the support of all the progressive and peaceful forces and urge them all, irrespective of their affiliations and beliefs, to offer the Palestinian people all aid and support in their just struggle for the liberation of their homeland.

Christendom

The Vatican said that it would sign a declaration with most of the world's Lutherans affirming that Roman Catholics and Lutherans share a basic understanding of how human beings receive God's forgiveness and salvation. The decision is intended to resolve an issue that split the Western Christian world 500 years ago. The document, approved last week by the Lutheran World Federation, declares that Catholics and Lutherans have found an essential common ground on the issue of justification, the action by which a human being is made worthy of salvation. The Reformation leader Martin Luther held that justification comes solely through faith in God, while the Catholic church taught that a person's good works play a role. Now, through the declaration, Catholics and Lutherans agree that divine forgiveness and salvation come only through God's grace and that good works flow from that.

—St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 6/26/98

Pope John Paul II has spoken of his "lifelong dream" of being able to hold a Christmas mass in the Holy Lands in 1999 and to hold a pilgrimage to Mount Sinai with Jews and Moslems as a sign of their reconciliation. The pope recently called for a swift end to disagreement on the status of Jerusalem. The Vatican favors international status for the city, and entertained Yassir Arafat for a private audience to discuss the peace process.

—DPA, 6/10/98

Economics

The split between the world's successful and troubled economies is wider than it has ever been. The contrast is startling, even unprecedented. The divergence between the west and much of the rest is becoming a chasm. At the end of the 20th century, the western countries that were dominant 100 years ago appear once more triumphant. Meanwhile, the plight of Asia, which until last year was the world's most dynamic region, worsens almost by the day. Since the beginning of June 1997, stock markets have fallen, in dollar terms, by 89 percent in Indonesia, 75 percent in South Korea, 73 percent in Malaysia, 71 percent in Thailand, 57 percent in the Philippines, and 47 percent in Hong Kong. This is no orderly reversal; it is a panic-led rout. The world economic state offers market collapses and disarray at the eastern end, market buoyancy and prosperity at the western one. At present the west, in general, and the US, in particular, seem blessed even by the dire misfortunes of others. But the stability of this world of divided fates is doubtful—economically and ultimately politically. Either sustained prosperity in the west will bring stability and renewed growth to Asia and elsewhere, or the spreading crisis is all too likely to export instability to the west.

—Financial Times, 6/14/98

The leaders of united Europe held a summit meeting that forced them to focus on a fundamental question: Is there really a united Europe? Presidents and prime ministers of the 15 nations that constitute the European Union (EU) spent two days discussing the economic and political unity of the new EU. The EU apparatus will dictate everything from the minimum price of zucchini to the proper design of zoos. German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, the leader of the EU's largest financial contributor faces a tough election in September and has been criticized for Germany's multi-billion-dollar annual contribution to the unified government in Brussels. The leaders of the EU agreed to hold a special summit meeting in Vienna later in the year to consider the pace and direction of unification. All of this reflects a sharp change of direction for European leaders who have been charging toward integration. A month ago, 11 EU countries formally agreed to give up their own money and switch to a common currency. Now the momentum is going the other way.

—Washington Post, 6/17/98

Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest petroleum producer signaled the creation of a new alliance of oil exporters that will be prepared to undertake "benign intervention" in global energy markets. Ali al-Naimi, the Saudi oil minister, said the emergence of a new ad hoc grouping to oversee the global oil trade would be composed of "free-thinking people looking after their national interests."

—Financial Times, 6/26/98

Science

The "Doomsday Clock" was reset five minutes closer to midnight by the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists. The clock's hands were moved to 11:51 to symbolize that directors of the journal see a failure of world diplomacy on the nuclear-arms issue and an increase in peril after nuclear testing by southern Asian neighbors Pakistan and India. The Bulletin is a bimonthly journal published at the University of Chicago and was created in 1947 with midnight signifying nuclear holocaust.

—Associated Press, 6/11/98

US climatologists reported that the Earth has broken global temperature records for each month of 1998 to extend an increasingly apparent warming pattern. The global temperature average between January and May jumped 0.3 degrees Celsius (1.76 degrees Fahrenheit). Last year saw the Earth's highest recorded temperature since thermometers were first used for measurement nearly 150 years ago. Climatologists said the increase could be due to the El Niño weather phenomenon, which was especially strong this year, but they are undecided on to what degree El Niño was influenced by global warming as a whole. Researchers said the data is alarming but they were confident in its accuracy.

—Associated Press, 6/8/98

Dr. Ian Wilmut, the British embryologist from the Roslin Institute in Scotland, whose scientific achievement of the cloning of the now famous sheep, "Dolly," delivered a speech on the commercial opportunities for mammalian cloning at the second annual congress in Washington, DC. Among the topics discussed were: Human Cloning for Enhancement Purposes; The First Human Cloning Company; Transgenics and Cloning; New Commercial Opportunities for Biotech and Large Pharmaceutical Companies. Lee Silver, Department of Molecular Biology at Princeton University, said, "Genetic engineering will shake the foundations of society."

—PR Newswire, 6/23/98