"So you think our new young people's president's hard and demanding, huh?" Lyndon asked, looking at Patricia Simons and me.

"Well, he's sure not making any bones about the fact that he thinks we're pretty worldly minded and . . . and materialistically inclined and bent." Patricia answered, sounding perturbed and even disgusted. "Sure I like pretty
clothes and pretty things, and I think Easter's a super-special time to show off the prettiest outfit one can find, and afford," she added, a bit tartly.

"But I thought all of us were praying for God to send us someone who could not only lead us but who would stir us and challenge us, too. I feel God answered our prayer when he sent the Showalter family here and then gave us Stan to be our leader. He's spiritual. And he's Spirit-filled. He carries a burden for the young people in our group.

"And for those who aren't in our group." I piped up, recalling having seen Stan out calling, door to door, on more than one occasion. "But this thing about donating a part of the money we saved for a new Easter outfit, well . . . that's . . . that's being dictatorial. I want to spend my money for what I want; I don't enjoy or appreciate bossy people."

"And that part about the cross . . . why Lyndon, you know as well as Susan and I do that that's a big order for us to fill. Imagine, if you will -- or can -- each of us being isolated in our room, and for one hour -- one whole hour! - - doing nothing but reading the Bible and praying and meditating upon the cross and what it represents to us as an individual and how it can change our lives! Whoever heard of such a thing!"

Lyndon laughed then. "Why, we just did" he added lightheartedly. "And personally, I'm all for it. We've been programmed to death. I feel it's time we have something more than a bunch of dead programs. And talk about boring! Some of us fellows would rather do almost anything else in the church than to sit in on one more boring young people's meeting."

Patricia and I gasped. Talk about shocked surprise! And coming from Lyndon, of all people. Usually, he was of the more silent class and, verbally, he rarely expressed his feelings or what he thought. Generally, he kept those things to himself. I suppose he felt there were enough others who always waited for an opportunity to speak up and to speak out without putting his I-think-this or I-feel-that into the "pot" of words.

Seeing our look of complete surprise seemed to please Lyndon. He smiled broadly, eyeing us carefully.
"You... shock me!" Patricia exclaimed, looking up into Lyndon's blue-gray eyes. "Do you realize how that hour will drag-g!" she asked, stretching the word out rather tediously and too lengthily, I thought.

Again Lyndon smiled. "Apparently someone's not in the best of practice" he remarked softly and kindly.

"Don't rub it in!" Patricia cried. "But I can just see myself holed up in the bedroom day after day for one whole hour, keeping my eyes on the clock and watching those minutes literally crawl by."

"You're supposed to be praying and reading the Bible and thinking about the cross and what took place upon it, not watching the clock, Pat!" Lyndon declared in his softly-smooth tone of voice.

"I know. I heard it; I'm not deaf. But honestly Lyndon, I see no way I can do this."

"If he would have told us to go spend an hour down at Bob's Soda Fountain every day I'm sure most everybody would have done so" Lyndon answered. "And no one would have complained about it either. We sure do need to be changed" he added as he walked away looking sad and grieved.

"Did you ever!" Patricia exclaimed, looking at me as though I made the change and had given the church assignment.

I studied her for a while then I said, "We're part of the group, Patricia, and I'm certain it's not going to hurt us to try to comply with what Stan asked us to do. In fact, it may help us. It just may be the best and greatest thing that ever came to our lives."

"You... you mean... you... you're going to do it then, Susan? That's a big order, my friend," she warned.

"The least we can do is cooperate, Pat. It's hardly fair to a leader not to cooperate. Put yourself in Stan's place: Would you like it if, after you have come up with an idea or a plan, your group would do nothing but oppose and fight it and bicker and complain over it? It will be an excellent lesson in discipline; a thing most of us can stand more of."
"You're . . . going to go ahead with the suggestion then?" Pat asked, looking confused.

"I'm certainly going to try," I replied. "I don't feel exactly spiritual," I added. "And this is bound to help each one of us."

Patricia sighed resignedly. "Well," she said, "I guess I'll try it too then. But please, Susan" she added quickly, "don't call and ask me how the hour went. Why, I've never spent that much time in a week doing what Stan asked us to do in a day!"

I felt something prick my heart when Patricia uttered the words. I was as "unskilled" -- every bit -- as she was, in Bible reading, praying, and meditating upon God and things spiritual. And frankly, I doubted that I spent one hour per week "exercising myself unto godliness."

Patricia's statement made me realize the state of my own heart; it seemed to have pulled the scales from my eyes. I shuddered with the realization and the revelation. I excused myself and hurried toward home, feeling tormented and wretchedly undone in my lukewarm, maybe. even, cold, spiritual condition.

I did all my regular assigned household chores in record time, not sparing quality or excellence for my haste, then I went to my bedroom and closed the door behind me.

I looked at my Bible on the night stand and realized that I hadn't read it for days. My heart was pricked. Here was a Book of all books; God's words to man! To me! It had the answer to every one of my problems and the healing balm for all of my hurts and my sorrows, my heartaches and pains, and I had literally ignored it and not bothered to search its truths, dig for its healing oil nor mine its gold.

Something inside my heart melted. I began sobbing. In a moment's time I was on my knees, feeling as humbled inside as my kneeling position and posture denoted outside And believe me. I literally "poured" my heart out to God. I emptied it by confessing my coldness, my soul-bleakness, and my lack of spirituality. Don't ask me how long I remained thus, confessing and repenting, I couldn't tell you how long; I don't know. You see, I felt that I was dealing with a life or death situation and it was solely up to me which way the
matter went and the lot fell. Naturally, I didn't allow one thing to remain covered; I confessed everything as the Holy Spirit revealed it to me. And I mean everything!

When the load lifted and my burden dropped off my weary sin-sick shoulders, I began to laugh and cry and shout for joy. Oh, I never -- I mean never! -- felt anything like what I was experiencing in this forgiven state, all made possible by and through the finished work of Jesus on Calvary. I looked at everything through a new me. In fact, I was sure the world in which I lived had also been made new, so wonderful and wondrously real was Christ and this radical heart change in me.

When I was able to get control of myself I hurried out to the kitchen to my mother. Throwing my arms around her dear neck I exclaimed joyously, "Oh, Mom, I'm saved. Saved! I just prayed clear through and my heart feels as light as a feather."

Mother was crying. "I heard you in your room," she remarked. "Oh, Susan, Susan, I'm so happy. I was concerned about you and your soul. Your father and I have been praying for you."

"Thanks, Mom, it paid off" I answered, as I went back to the bedroom again to read from my dear, precious Bible.

Needless to say, Stan's one hour was just not long enough now for me to "exercise" myself unto godliness and holiness. The Word came alive for me and I "ate" it hungrily. Oh, how I loved it and delighted in it! And my meditation upon the cross, and all that it stood for and represented, humbled me even more than previously, if such was possible: I became fully aware of the fact that my sins not only put Jesus on the cross but kept Him there as well. Not the nails, but love -- Divine love, for me! -- caused Him to suffer and endure the excruciating pain and agony of the cross and to hang there in ignominy and shame.

I had never known weeping such as now possessed me. I loved Him so very much and I longed to ease the pain and the torment that His body had felt and endured for me. I continued weeping, telling Him how much I appreciated what He had done for me, one who was most unworthy. And then a new revelation broke in upon me. I saw that unless I got rid of the carnal nature within my bosom I would crucify Him afresh and anew; for the
natural (carnal) man warred against the new spiritual man within me and until the "old man" was crucified and my soul was sanctified wholly, the battle between the two natures would continue.

Again I went to prayer. Oh, how I prayed and besought the Lord for total and complete deliverance from the old nature within me. And then He came in sanctifying, burning, cleansing power and fire. My soul was made pure and clean and holy. I was emptied of self and dead to self and everything, and I was filled with the sweet Holy Ghost. Oh, my entire body was aflame with Heavenly Love I wanted no higher calling than to please Him and to love Him.

Stan's suggested hour, in the days that followed, was always of too short duration: I got up early each morning now to spend the first two to three hours with the Christ Who had taken up occupancy in my heart and Who was crowned King of my life.

Three days after my glorious heart change Michelle Coffee called me on the phone.

"Susan" she said, speaking in a voice positively running over with excitement, "did you hear about Chantel? Isn't it just awful that she'd. . . ."

Something -- or, rather, Someone -- inside of me caused me to interrupt Michelle with, "I'd rather we didn't discuss Chantel. Please!"

"But it's positively the worst and wildest and most wicked thing she's done yet, I do believe. She's just not. . . ."

"Please, Michelle, don't say anything more." I protested, feeling the Heavenly King's gentle Spirit within me urging me not to listen to gossip. It was as though He let me see that by doing so I was nailing Him to that horrible thing of suffering and shame once again.

"Are you all right, Susan?" she asked quickly. "Very much so, Michelle"

"Well, then, let me tell you about Bonita Brown. She's the girl I nicknamed BB. Remember? And do you get it -- BB? Well, anyhow, she's been running with . . ."
"Michelle, dear," I said quickly, "please, no gossip. None whatever. It's sinful and evil to talk this way about others. I've had a radical heart change; I can't do this anymore. I love you."

"Oh, so you think you're super spiritual, huh? Well if that's how you feel, good bye!" And she slammed the phone down so hard that it hurt my ears.

Slowly, I went back to what I had been doing before Michelle called, and then it was that I realized how eagerly and willingly I had listened to her "juicy tidbits" of gossip heretofore. And I had seemed to take delight in "gleaning" what Michelle had to say. Now, however, with Jesus crowned and ruling and reigning as King in my heart and life, I had an abhorrence for it since it, like every other sin, had been responsible for the death of the One whom I now worshipped and adored. I praised Him for this deliverance.

Needless to say, Easter took on a new meaning for me; its significance -- that is to say, its true significance -- became one of the most noteworthy things in my life. No longer was I consumed with finding and wearing the finest Easter outfit. Patricia and I agreed that our new garment of salvation and holiness of heart and life was the greatest of all. And best of all, this garment had enduring value. Eternal value!

Stan -- bless him! -- didn't realize when he challenged us what an impact it would have upon us. Or did he! Revival fire broke out in the church, beginning -- of all places! -- with the young people's meetings! Talk about glory and fire and power and victory! I've never seen anything like it. But I know one thing, and God helping me, I don't want it ever to stop. I've seen His glory. I've felt His glory. I've experienced His glory, and the fire of Pentecost, and nothing less will ever satisfy me again.

Thank you, Stan, for being a Spirit-filled young people's leader whose praying and fasting and godly life stirred us in our comfortable little "nests" until we couldn't rest but had to do something about it. And thank You, Dear Lord, for the finished work of Christ in our hearts!