

All Rights Reserved By HDM For This Digital Publication
Copyright 2001 Holiness Data Ministry

Duplication of this CD by any means is forbidden, and
copies of individual files must be made in accordance with
the restrictions stated in the B4UCopy.txt file on this CD.

2700-PLUS SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS (Q-R-TOPICS)
Compiled and Arranged Topically by Duane V. Maxey

* * * * *

CONTENTS

QUIETNESS

1982 -- Stopping To Listen

READINESS

1983 -- Clean When He Comes

1984 -- Get Ready

1985 -- Make Your Reservation

READINESS -- FOR SPIRITUAL SERVICE

1986 -- Dwight Moody Said It

READINESS -- PRECEDES BLESSINGS

1987 -- When The Wind Blows

REAPING

1988 -- A Sad Contrast

1989 -- John's Scheme Backfired

RECONCILIATION

1990 -- A Wise Answer That Turned Away Wrath

RECONCILIATION -- THROUGH CHRIST

1991 -- Reconciled By Death

RECONCILIATION -- WITH MEN

1992 -- A Reconciliation Not Regretted

1993 -- Washington's Reconciliation With Payne

REDEMPTION -- THROUGH CHRIST

1994 -- Charge It!

REDEMPTION -- THROUGH CHRIST

1995 -- Love Found A Way

REGENERATION

1996 -- A New Skipper Aboard

1997 -- Dead People Don't Give

1998 -- Fallen Man Needs A New Mainspring

1999 -- Not New Bands, But New Birth

REJECTION -- OF CHRIST

2000 -- Afraid Of God

2001 -- Irresponsive To God

2002 -- The Weight Of Repeatedly Rejecting Christ

REJECTION -- OF THE WORD OF GOD

2003 -- A Closer Look

REJOICING

2004 -- Rejoicing When One Is Healed Of Sin

RELIGIOUS LEADERS -- COURAGEOUS REFORMERS

2005 -- Great Growth From A Small Seed

RELIGIOUS LEADERS -- HUMBLE

2006 -- Not A Bad Model

RELIGIOUS LEADERS -- MEN OF GOD

2007 -- Chicago Is Out Of Men Of God

RELIGIOUS LEADERS -- RESPONSIBILITY OF

2008 -- A Statement Of John Wesley

2009 -- For The First 100 Years

RELIGIOUS REFORMS -- IDOLS PUT AWAY

2010 -- Smash The Idols

REMEMBRANCE

2011 -- He Remembered Christ!

2012 -- Memory

2013 -- Now, She Is Forgotten

2014 -- Powell's Epitaph

2015 -- The Desire To Be Remembered

2016 -- The One We Must Remember

REPENTANCE

2017 -- Cancer Corrective

2018 -- Death-Bed Repentance

2019 -- Enough To Quit
2020 -- God's Deadline
2021 -- I Still Think You're Dumb!
2022 -- More Time For Repentance
2023 -- Repentance Verses Reformation
2024 -- The First To Burn
2025 -- The Key To Paradise
2026 -- The Missing Ingredient
2027 -- The One Who Forgave The Woman
2028 -- Truett's Tragedy
2029 -- Turning Points
2030 -- What Jim Bakker Now Admits
2031 -- What Lead Him To Repentance

REPENTANCE -- DUTY OF

2032 -- Repent Now

REPROACH

2033 -- Polycarp Bore The Reproach Of Christ

REST

2034 -- Relaxation Is Sometimes Legitimate

REST -- PHYSICAL

2035 -- He Didn't Plan To Be Like The Devil

2036 -- He Ran Into His Own Cannon Shells

REST -- SPIRITUAL

2037 -- Christ, The True Yokefellow

2038 -- Finding Rest In Christ

2039 -- The Second Rest

REST OF THE STORY

2040 -- May Be Purposely Withheld

2041 -- May Explain The Silence

2042 -- May Reveal Relationship -- Or Lack Of It

RESTITUTION

2043 -- An Effective Preacher Of Restitution

RESTITUTION -- PARTIAL

2044 -- If I Still Have Trouble Sleeping

RESTORATION

2045 -- Grace To Soar As High Again

2046 -- The Estrangement Was Gone

2047 -- The Master's Hand
2048 -- The Master's Touch

RESURRECTION

2049 -- Her Grave Was Opened By A Tree Seed
2050 -- His Death Certificate Was Cancelled
2051 -- The Former Tenant Not Dead

RESURRECTION -- OF CHRIST

2052 -- A Feat He Could Not Perform
2053 -- Because The Tomb Was Empty
2054 -- Don't Forget
2055 -- Michelangelo Was Right

RESURRECTION -- OF CHRIST ANNOUNCED

2056 -- The Resurrection Spelled Victory

RESURRECTION -- PROOFS OF CHRIST'S

2057 -- He Appeared To Them Alive
2058 -- No Trace Of Human Remains

RETALIATION

2059 -- Retaliation Repudiated
2060 -- The Other Cheek

RETRIBUTION

2061 -- An Invisible Painter
2062 -- Retribution Struck At One O'clock
2063 -- The Bell On Inch Cape Rock
2064 -- The Prediction Was Fulfilled

RETURNING -- UNTO GOD

2065 -- An Opened Door And Listening Ears
2066 -- Mother's Message
2067 -- When Men Return Unto God

REVELATIONS

2068 -- Mask Torn Off

REVENGE

2069 -- A Gown For A Gun
2070 -- He Made Himself Look Bad
2071 -- Pardon Instead Of Revenge
2072 -- Sunk By Own Attack

REVERENCE -- FOR CHRIST

2073 -- The One To Whom He Bowed

REVIVAL OF SIN

2074 -- He Thought It Was Dead -- He Was Wrong!

REVIVALS

2075 -- A History-Making Revival Broke Out

2076 -- Great Awakenings Have Begun In Prayer

2077 -- Moody Became A Menace To Some

2078 -- Prayer For Revival In A Song

2079 -- Revival -- If?

2080 -- Revivals From One, Small Source

2081 -- The Dividing Line Obliterated

2082 -- The Great Revival

REVIVALS -- SOUGHT

2083 -- Awakening Through Prayer

2084 -- Muscatine, Iowa Revival

2085 -- Praying Members

2086 -- Revival Is The Need, Not A Museum

REWARDS -- FOR SERVICE

2087 -- Benny Locke's Railroad Run

REWARDS -- FOR SERVICE

2088 -- Delayed Returns

2089 -- Payday Someday

2090 -- You're Not Home Yet

RICHES

2091 -- A Check That Will Bounce At The Judgment!

2092 -- Laughing Millionaires Are Rare

2093 -- Money Management

2094 -- Monkeys Trapped By Their Greed

2095 -- Old Testament Monetary Measures

2096 -- Plunge Into Silence

2097 -- Some Things Money Won't Buy

2098 -- That Man's Religion Is Vain

2099 -- What Money Can't Buy

2100 -- When He Was Happy

RICHES -- DECEPTIVE

2101 -- Happiness Is Not Based On Money

2102 -- That Same Afternoon He Died

2103 -- What Became Of Them

2104 -- When There Is Silver On The Glass

RICHES -- DISAPPOINTING

- 2105 -- A Rotten Idea
- 2106 -- He Did Not Become President
- 2107 -- It Had All Come Too Easily

RICHES -- EARTHLY

- 2108 -- A Fulfillment Of Ecclesiastes 6:2
- 2109 -- Eternal Riches Are Not Inherited Thus
- 2110 -- Oranges Valued More Than Diamonds
- 2111 -- The Sad Life Of Howard Hughes

RICHES -- FLEETING AND UNCERTAIN

- 2112 -- Bankrupt Theories
- 2113 -- Can't Afford To Save Money
- 2114 -- God Granted That Desire
- 2115 -- The Stock Market
- 2116 -- Who Needs This?

RICHES -- PERILS OF

- 2117 -- A Good Servant, A Poor Master
- 2118 -- A Very Small Camel, A Very Large Needle
- 2119 -- Augmenting Means, Or Diminishing Wants
- 2120 -- No Riches In Heaven

RICHES -- SPIRITUAL

- 2121 -- A Gem Of An Idea
- 2122 -- An Interesting Story -- A Poor Application
- 2123 -- Emptied To Be Filled
- 2124 -- More Wealthy Than The Rich Man
- 2125 -- Stored In One Of His Own Warehouses
- 2126 -- The Task
- 2127 -- The World's Largest Sapphire
- 2128 -- Value Of The Incarnation Unrecognized

RIFTS

- 2129 -- If -- In The Middle Of Rift

RIGHT OF A MAN -- GOD DEFENDS

- 2130 -- Mr. District Attorney

RIGHTEOUSNESS -- COMMANDED

- 2131 -- From Washington's Final Public Speech

RIGHTEOUSNESS -- OF CHRIST

- 2132 -- Christ's Righteousness, Our Ark

RIVERS

2133 -- The Runaway River

ROSE OF SHARON

2134 -- Don't Forget The Best

RULERS -- WARNINGS TO

2135 -- Seen As An Act Of God

RUNNING THE RACE

2136 -- Running As If Your Life Was At Stake

* * *

QUIETNESS

1982 -- STOPPING TO LISTEN

A man working in an ice plant amid the ice, and the sawdust in which it was stored, lost a valuable watch. His fellow workmen searched with him for more than two hours, but were unable to find it. They left the plant for lunch and returned to find a little boy with the watch in his hand. "How ever did you find it?" they inquired. He replied, "I just lay down in the sawdust and heard it ticking." We, too, cannot find God by intensive, bustling search, but must "be still, and know that I am God."

* * *

READINESS

1983 -- CLEAN WHEN HE COMES

A gentleman visiting a certain school gave out that he would give a prize to the pupil whose desk he found in the best order when he returned. "But when will you return?" some of them asked. "That I cannot tell," was the answer. A little girl, who had been noted for her disorderly habits, announced that she meant to win the prize. "You!" her schoolmates jeered; "why, your desk is always out of order." "Oh! but I mean to clean it the first of every week." "But suppose he should come at the end of the week? someone asked. "Then I will clean it every morning." "But he may come at the end of the day." For a moment the little girl was silent. "I know what I'll do," she said decidedly, "I'll just keep it clean." -- McCartney

* * *

READINESS

1984 -- GET READY

A mother was explaining, to her little girl, the death of her father. The mother said: "God has sent for your father and will send for us, but I do not know just when." Finally, the little girl said: "If we do not know just when God is going to send for us, do you not think we had better pack up and get ready to go? God might send when we are not ready."

* * *

READINESS

1985 -- MAKE YOUR RESERVATION

Some years ago, a party of sight-seers were traveling together in England and arrived at an English hotel, but found that it had been full for days. They were turning away to seek accommodation elsewhere, when a lady of the party bade the others adieu, and expressed her intention of remaining. "How can that be?" they asked, "when you hear the hotel is full?" "Oh," she replied, "I telegraphed on ahead a number of days ago and my room is secured."

My friend, send your name on ahead, and the door of Heaven can never be shut against you. Be sure, it is a wise precaution. Then everything will be ready for you. And when the journey of life is over, you will mount up as with angel-wings and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. -- D. L. Moody

* * *

READINESS -- FOR SPIRITUAL SERVICE

1986 -- DWIGHT MOODY SAID IT

It was Dwight Moody who said, "I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And that which I can do, by the grace of God, I will do." With that simple commitment, God used him to bring revival to England and America.

* * *

READINESS -- PRECEDES BLESSINGS

1987 -- WHEN THE WIND BLOWS

A young man applied for a job as a farmhand. When asked for his qualifications, he said, "I can sleep when the wind blows." This puzzled the farmer, but he took a liking to the young man and hired him. A few days later, the farmer and his wife were awakened in the night by a violent storm. They quickly began to check things out to see if all was secure. They found that the shutters of the farmhouse had been securely fastened. A good supply of logs had been set next to the fireplace. The farm implements had been placed in the storage shed, safe from the elements. The tractor had been moved into the garage. The barn had been properly locked. All was well. Even

the animals were calm. It was then that the farmer grasped the meaning of the young man's words, "I can sleep when the wind blows." Because the farmhand had performed his work loyally and faithfully when the skies were clear, he was prepared for the storm when it broke. Consequently, when the wind blew, he had no fear. He was able to sleep in peace.

* * *

REAPING

1988 -- A SAD CONTRAST

Dr. Pierce Harris of First Methodist Church, Atlanta, Georgia, once spoke at a prison work camp. The prisoner introducing him recalled earlier days of association with the minister. "Several years ago," he said, "two boys lived in the same community in north Georgia and attended the same school, played with the same bunch of fellows, and went to the same Sunday School. One of them dropped out of Sunday School because he felt he had outgrown it, and that it was 'sissy stuff.' The other boy kept on going because he felt that it really meant something in his life. The boy who dropped out is the one who is making this introduction today. The boy who kept going to Sunday School is the famous preacher who will preach to us this morning.

* * *

REAPING

1989 -- JOHN'S SCHEME BACKFIRED

John Smith was a loyal carpenter, working for a very successful building contractor who called him into his office one day and said, "John, I'm putting you in charge of the next house we build. I want you to order all the materials and oversee the whole job from the ground up."

John accepted the assignment with great enthusiasm and excitement. For ten days before ground was broken at the building site, John studied the blueprints. He checked every measurement, every specification. Suddenly he had a thought. "If I am really in charge," he said to himself, "why couldn't I cut a few corners, use less- expensive materials, and put the extra money in my pocket? Who would know the difference? Once the house is painted, it will look just great."

So John set about his scheme. He ordered second-grade lumber, but his reports indicated that it was top-grade. He ordered inexpensive concrete for the foundation, put in cheap wiring, and cut every corner he could, yet he reported the purchase of much better materials. When the home was completed and fully painted, he asked the contractor to come and see it.

"John," said the contractor, "What a magnificent job you have done! You have been such a good and faithful carpenter all these years that I have decided to show my gratitude by giving you this house you have built, as a gift!"

Education is similar to building a house. If the foundation is strong, there is real strength for the future. If the proper materials go into the construction, it will last a long time. But if we build with shoddy materials, cut corners, and take the easy way out, we build a weak house on a poor foundation. Followers of Jesus Christ are called upon to study God's Word, reflect on it, and pray, so that all of life becomes a rich experience of learning.

* * *

RECONCILIATION

1990 -- A WISE ANSWER THAT TURNED AWAY WRATH

Frederick the Great, King of Prussia for 46 years, was once in Potsdam when he encountered one of his generals who had long been in his disfavor. At their meeting the general saluted with the greatest respect, but Frederick merely turned his back on the officer. "I am happy to see that Your Majesty is no longer angry with me," the general murmured.

"How so?" demanded Frederick.

"Because Your Majesty has never in his life turned his back on an enemy." It was a daring statement, but it was reported to have led to a reconciliation!

* * *

RECONCILIATION -- THROUGH CHRIST

1991 -- RECONCILED BY DEATH

Years ago in a Western city, a husband and wife became estranged and finally separated. They left the city and resided in different parts of the country. The husband, one day, chanced to return to this city on a matter of business. He went out to the cemetery to the grave of their only son. He was standing by the grave in fond reminiscence, when he heard a step behind him. Turning, he saw his estranged wife. The first inclination of both was to turn away. But they had a common binding interest in that grave; and instead of turning away they clasped hands over that grave of their son and were reconciled one to another. It took nothing less than death to reconcile them!

It takes nothing less than death, the precious blood of Christ, to reconcile man to God. The pronouncement, the proclamation of that, is the gospel message. -- McCartney

* * *

RECONCILIATION -- WITH MEN

1992 -- A RECONCILIATION NOT REGRETTE

Renowned British novelists William Thackeray and Charles Dickens once had a vicious quarrel. Just before Christmas in 1863 they met in London, but refused to speak with one another. Pricked in his conscience, Thackeray turned back and seized the hand of his friend, saying he couldn't bear the coldness between them. Dickens was touched, and the old anger and jealousy gave way to reconciliation. Shortly afterward, Thackeray suddenly died. Reflecting on this incident, a man who knew both Thackeray and Dickens wrote in his memoirs, "The next time I saw Dickens he was standing at the grave of his rival. He must have rejoiced, I thought, that he had shaken hands so warmly a few days before."

* * *

RECONCILIATION -- WITH MEN

1993 -- WASHINGTON'S RECONCILIATION WITH PAYNE

When George Washington was stationed in early life at Alexandria, with a regiment under his command, his spirit became heated one day at an election, and he said something very offensive to a Mr. Payne. In response, Payne felled him to the ground with one blow of his cane. On hearing of the insult offered to their commander, the regiment, burning for revenge immediately started for the city; but Washington met them and begged them by their regard for him to return peaceably to their barracks. Thinking himself in the wrong in his hasty expressions, he nobly resolved to make an honorable reparation. The next morning Washington sent a polite note requesting Payne to meet him at the tavern. Payne took it for a challenge, and went in expectation of a duel. However, what was his surprise to find, instead of pistols, a decanter of wine on the table.

Washington rose to meet him and said with a smile, "Mr. Payne, to err is human; but to correct our errors is always honorable. I believe I was wrong yesterday. You have had, I think, some satisfaction; and, if you deem that sufficient, here is my hand. Let us be friends."

Such an act of justice and courtesy few could resist; and Payne became, from that moment through life, an enthusiastic friend and admirer of Washington, who in all of his victories never won a more glorious triumph. When by ruling his own spirit, he subdued the anger of his enemy and won his confidence and love. -- Dictionary Of Illustrations

* * *

REDEMPTION -- THROUGH CHRIST

1994 -- CHARGE IT!

A little girl was sitting on Santa Claus' lap. She gave him a whole list of expensive toys which she wanted for Christmas and then without a word of appreciation, she jumped off Santa's lap and started toward her mother. Her concerned mother spoke quickly, "Honey, haven't you forgotten something?" The little girl thought for a moment, then said, "O, yes." Then turning back toward Santa, she shouted, "Charge it."

God has already "charged" our sins to His Son and has paid the debt in full. What more could you ask for at Christmas?

* * *

REDEMPTION -- THROUGH CHRIST

1995 -- LOVE FOUND A WAY

Who has not read with thrilling interest the story of old curfew? A young soldier, for some offence, was condemned to die, and the time of his death was fixed "at the ringing of the curfew." Naturally, such a doom would be fearful and bitter to one in the years of his hope and prime; but to this unhappy youth, death was doubly terrible since he was soon to marry a beautiful, young lady whom he had long loved. The lady, who loved him ardently in return, had used her utmost efforts to avert his fate, pleading with the judges, and even with Cromwell himself; but all in vain. In her despair, she tried to get the old sexton not to ring the bell, but she found that to be impossible.

The hour for the execution drew near. The preparations were completed. The officers of the law brought forth the prisoner, and waited while the sun was setting for the signal from the distant bell tower. To the wonder of everybody, curfew did not ring! Only one human being, at that moment, knew the reason. The poor girl, half wild with the thought of her lover's peril, had rushed unseen up the winding stairs, and climbed the ladders into the belfry loft, and seized the tongue of the bell. The old sexton was in his place, prompt to the fatal moment. He threw his weight upon the rope, and the bell, obedient to his practised hand, reeled and swung to and fro in the tower. But the brave girl kept her hold, and no sound issued from its metallic lips.

Again and again, the sexton drew the rope, but with desperate strength the young heroine held on. Every moment made her position more fearful; every sway of the mighty bell threatened to fling her through the high tower window; but she would not let go. At last, the sexton went away. Old and deaf, he had not noticed that the curfew gave no peal. The brave girl descended from the belfry, wounded and trembling. She hurried from the church to the place of execution. Cromwell himself was there, and, just as he was sending to demand why the bell was silent, she saw him:

And her brow,
Lately white with sorrow, glows with hope and courage now.
At his feet she told her story, showed her hands all bruised and torn,
And her young face, still haggard with the anguish it had worn,
Touched his heart with sudden pity, lit his eyes with misty light--
"Go; your lover lives," cried Cromwell; Curfew shall not ring tonight.

Think you that this young man, redeemed by that sacrifice of love from the clutches of the law, would regard any service to the fair woman who redeemed him a hardship? Nay, he would have been willing to have laid his life upon the altar for her!

Now, let us listen to another story of love. The scene is laid at Calvary. Jesus is upon the cross. The brow, once crowned with glory, is now crowned with thorns. The hands, so often outstretched in love and mercy, are now pinioned to the cross. The heart that throbbed and ached with human sorrow is now pierced with a spear. Oh, it is a sad moment in the history of the world! The earth trembles; the mountains quake; and the sun veils itself in darkness, for God's Son is dying. But listen! "It is finished! It is finished! It is finished!" The great plan of redemption, born in the heart of love, has now received its finishing touch, and God and the world stand reconciled!

Oh, dear friends, this was for us! Shall we not respond, not only with our hearts but with our substance, yea with all that we have, to gladden His dear heart and spread His kingdom from pole to pole? -- L. G. Broughton

* * *

REGENERATION

1996 -- A NEW SKIPPER ABOARD

There was a steamer which plied from London to Plymouth -- such a lumbering, awkward craft that every time it entered the dock it injured itself or the dock-gate. But one day, it hove into sight, and, while everybody was looking to see what damage would be done, this time it sailed in easily and true. A bystander shouted, "Well, old Bust 'Em Up, what is the matter now?" Another replied, "Same old ship, guv'nor, but we have a new skipper aboard." -- Fullerton

* * *

REGENERATION

1997 -- DEAD PEOPLE DON'T GIVE

It is remarkable how little we give to God, in comparison with what we waste on self. A pastor spent thirty minutes urging a lady of his church to give him a contribution for Foreign Missions. Finally, a check was handed him for two dollars. Looking at it, he glanced up, and in subdued, but earnest, tones said: "A check from a hand wearing five hundred dollars worth of diamonds should be larger than this if the wearer belongs to Christ." The check was made larger, but even then not large compared with the diamonds. -- Topical Illustrations

*She needed, first of all, to be really saved. Then, with the great Giver Himself living in her heart, it would not have been necessary to goad her into giving. Also, it is likely that before long, as she walked in the light, the outward adornment would have been shed in order to retain the inward ornament of a meek and lowly heart. -- Duane V. Maxey

* * *

REGENERATION

1998 -- FALLEN MAN NEEDS A NEW MAINSPRING

I heard of an old man who had what he thought to be a very valuable clock. There came a time when it refused to run for its proud owner, so he removed the hands from the face of the clock and took them to a jeweler, requesting him to fix them so they would tell the time. The astonished jeweler said "Mose, you will have to bring the entire clock to the shop before I can fix it." The old man replied, "Look heah, Boss, you's jist tryin' to git my clock. I won't trus' dat clock wit no strangah."

There are many who are ready to offer the outward pretenses at religion by improving their morals, but refuse to submit the chronometer of a carnal heart to God, the Maker, and to Jesus, the Divine Jeweler. The timepiece of life does not need a new dial, as much as it needs a new mainspring. God's call to each one is "My son, give Me thine heart." To refuse to obey that command of God, regardless of one's moral standing, is to miss heaven in the end. -- O. A. Newlin

* * *

REGENERATION

1999 -- NOT NEW BANDS, BUT NEW BIRTH

Human nature is too bad to be improved, too dilapidated to be repaired. Here is a cracked bell. How again to restore it? By one of two methods: The first is to repair the bell, to encompass it with hoops, to surround it with bands. Nevertheless, you can easily discern the crack of the bell in the crack of the sound. The only effectual way is to re-melt the bell, recast it, and make it all new. Then it will ring clear, and sound sonorous. Human nature is a bell suspended high up in the steeple of creation to ring forth the praises of the Creator. The fall in Eden cracked the bell. How again to restore it? By one of two ways: One is to surround it with outward laws and regulations as with steel hoops. Nevertheless, the crack in the metal shows itself in the crack of the tone. The best way is to re-melt it, recast it, remold it. This is God's method in the Gospel. -- W. W. Landrum

* * *

REJECTION -- OF CHRIST

2000 -- AFRAID OF GOD

Di Arnot tells us of a poor woman in great distress because she could not pay her rent. She was expecting the officer to seize her goods. Her pastor heard of her trouble and went to her house with the money for her rent. He knocked but could not get an answer. He went to different doors and windows, so eager was he to help her, but he received no response. At last he was compelled to go away, carrying the money back with him. The good woman thought it was the officer seeking entrance to carry away her goods, and she had tightly barred every door and window and gave no heed to the knocking. Many people imagine that Christ comes as an enemy to put a yoke upon their

necks to add to their burdens, and they shut him out. If they knew what blessings He brings in His hands they would open gladly. -- H. F. Sayles

* * *

REJECTION -- OF CHRIST

2001 -- IRRESPONSIVE TO GOD

A man cannot get God's spiritual blessings if he does not want them. You take a hermetically sealed bottle, and put it into the sea; it may float about in mid-ocean for a century, surrounded by a shoreless ocean, and it will be as dry and empty inside at the end as it was at the beginning. So, you and I float, live, move, and have our being in the great ocean of God's love in Christ, but you can cork up your hearts, and wax them over with an impenetrable cover, through which that grace does not come. And you do it, some of you. -- A. Maclaren

* * *

REJECTION -- OF CHRIST

2002 -- THE WEIGHT OF REPEATEDLY REJECTING CHRIST

A famous scientist tells how that in the course of his experiments in the mountains, he used to be lowered over a precipice. He would step into the basket, and the men would lower him for his work; but whenever they lowered him they would always test his weight to see if they could lift him again. One day, they let him down farther and farther than ever before, until all the rope at their command was exhausted. When his day's work was done, he would give the signal and they would draw him up. But on this night, when they took hold of the rope to lift him, they could not do so. They tugged and pulled and strained, but they could not manage it, and he had to wait until they got additional men to pull him up. The scientist says that the reason they could not lift him was because they failed to take into consideration the length and weight of the rope. I know why a man of fifty years of age has a hard time to surrender. It is because he must always lift against his past refusals. You say "No," and your heart is hardened; you say "No" again, and your will becomes stubborn, and if you are finally lost, the responsibility is not with God. -- J. Wilbur Chapman

* * *

REJECTION -- OF THE WORD OF GOD

2003 -- A CLOSER LOOK

Many years ago, while on a visit to America, a wealthy Chinese businessman was fascinated by a powerful microscope. Looking through its lens to study crystals and the petals of flowers, he was amazed at their beauty and detail. So he decided to purchase one of these devices and take it back to China. He thoroughly enjoyed using it until one day he examined some rice he was planning to eat for dinner. Much to his dismay, he discovered that tiny living creatures were

crawling in it. Since he was especially fond of this staple food in his daily diet, he wondered what to do. Finally he concluded that there was only one way out of his dilemma -- he would destroy the instrument that caused him to discover the distasteful fact! So he smashed the microscope to pieces. "How foolish!" you say. But many people do the same thing with the Word of God. They hate it and would like to get rid of it because it reveals their evil nature.

* * *

REJOICING

2004 -- REJOICING WHEN ONE IS HEALED OF SIN

Miriam Zartarian is a pleasant-faced, attractive young Armenian girl who was kept in the detention pen of the Boston Immigration Station for nearly two years. What was the cause of this long imprisonment? That disease of the eyes, trachoma, which is so properly dreaded in this country that those afflicted with it are not permitted to land. Miriam was a victim of the disease, but she could not be sent back to Turkey because her parents lived in Boston and she was coming over to them.

Well, for two years Uncle Sam has been a foster father to this Armenian girl, and you may be sure she has had the best of care. She came to love the immigration officials and the attendants at the station, and they came to love her. At last, it was thought that her eyes were cured. A medical board of special inquiry was constituted by the Washington authorities. The newspapers aroused public interest in her case, and the verdict was eagerly awaited. Finally, a telegram was received bearing the good news from Secretary Straus. The Armenian captive was free, and all Boston rejoiced. -- McCartney

In like manner, the saints, the angels, the Christian family members, of one who is finally healed of sin rejoice when the cure is complete. Thorough repentance of sin by the sin-plagued sinner, followed by complete spiritual regeneration by God's Spirit, bring to an end that soul's exile from God's holy nation. The doors of salvation are flung open, and all heaven rejoices with the happy saints below in the admittance of one more sin-cured soul into the fellowship of Christ's kingdom! -- Duane V. Maxey

* * *

RELIGIOUS LEADERS -- COURAGEOUS REFORMERS

2005 -- GREAT GROWTH FROM A SMALL SEED

A great growth from a small seed: The operation of this same law may be observed in later ages. In the Popish convent at Erfurt a studious young monk sits alone in his cell, earnestly examining an ancient record. The student is Luther, and the book the Bible. He has read many books before, but his reading has never made him wretched till now. In other books he saw other people; but in this book for the first time he saw himself. His own sin, when conscience was quickened and enlightened to discern it, became a burden heavier than he could bear. For a time

he was in a horror of great darkness; but when at last he found "the righteousness which is of God by faith," he grew hopeful, happy, and strong. Here is a living seed, but it is very small: an awakened, exercised, conscientious, believing monk, is an imperceptible atom which superstitious multitudes, and despotic princes, and a persecuting priesthood will overlay and smother, as the heavy furrow covers the microscopic mustard seed. But the living seed burst, and sprang, and pierced through all these coverings. How great it grew and how far it spread history tells today. We have cause to thank God for the greatness of the Reformation, and to rebuke ourselves for its smallness.

* * *

RELIGIOUS LEADERS -- HUMBLE

2006 -- NOT A BAD MODEL

Bruce Larson, in his book "Wind and Fire," points out some interesting facts about sandhill cranes: "These large birds, who fly great distances across continents, have three remarkable qualities. First, they rotate leadership. No one bird stays out in front all the time. Second, they choose leaders who can handle turbulence. And then, all during the time one bird is leading, the rest are honking their affirmation. That's not a bad model for the church. Certainly we need leaders who can handle turbulence and who are aware that leadership ought to be shared. But most of all, we need a church where we are all honking encouragement."

* * *

RELIGIOUS LEADERS -- MEN OF GOD

2007 -- CHICAGO IS OUT OF MEN OF GOD

I enjoy the story of the businessman who read a little book entitled Men of God. He was so moved that he determined to secure copies for all of his employees. He wired the publisher in Chicago: "Send 125 copies of Men of God."

The publisher wired back, "Chicago is out of Men of God, try Los Angeles."

What about your town? Does it have any men of God?

* * *

RELIGIOUS LEADERS -- RESPONSIBILITY OF

2008 -- A STATEMENT OF JOHN WESLEY

Give me 100 preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen; they alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. -- John Wesley

* * *

RELIGIOUS LEADERS -- RESPONSIBILITY OF

2009 -- FOR THE FIRST 100 YEARS

In 1636 Harvard College was founded by Reverend John Harvard, who contributed the land and his own private library. On the gateposts today appears an inscription that explains why he established the school: To maintain "A literate clergy", John Harvard recognized that only a handful of ministers from England would be willing to migrate to this new and rough land, so he was burdened to start a Christian college in American. For many years, Harvard College was the principal educational training center for ministers and missionaries, as well as school teachers. Since then hundreds of ministers have founded Christian colleges. Bible school, graduate schools, universities, and seminaries. For the first 100 years of American history, every college started in this country was founded by a church, denomination, or religious group.

* * *

RELIGIOUS REFORMS -- IDOLS PUT AWAY

2010 -- SMASH THE IDOLS

When Mahmud of Ghazni invaded India, his conquering forces entered a celebrated temple to destroy it. He was entreated by the priest to spare a certain idol but refused. Instead, he rained repeated blows upon it. Suddenly the image burst open, and a stream of precious stones cascaded from its hollow interior. So, too, for each idol the Christian destroys in his life, he gains more than he loses! Every one that is demolished brings him new treasures of grace and removes another hindrance to a productive life of prayer!

* * *

REMEMBRANCE

2011 -- HE REMEMBERED CHRIST!

May it be ours to die like that saint, Bishop Beveridge, around whose bed wife and children stood, weeping over the wreck of faded faculties, and a blank, departed memory.

One had asked him, "Father, do you remember me?" and received no answer; and another, and another also, but still no answer. Then all making way for the venerable companion of a long and loving pilgrimage, the tender partner of many a past joy and sorrow, his wife, draws near. She bends over him, and as her tears fall thick upon his face, she asks, "Do you remember me?" A stare; but it is vacant.

At this moment, one calm enough to remember how the love of Christ's spouse is "strong as death," a love that "many waters cannot quench," stooped to his ear and said, "Do you remember Jesus Christ?" That name seem to recall the spirit, hovering for a moment, ere it took wing to heaven. Touched, as by an electric influence, the heart beat once more; and, with a smile in which the soul took its flight to glory, he replied, "Remember Jesus Christ! dear Jesus Christ! He is all my salvation and all my desire." -- Guthrie

* * *

REMEMBRANCE

2012 -- MEMORY

The ancients fancied that there was a river called in the Elysian Fields, from whose waters the souls of the dead drank oblivion of their past life. But in the command to Dives to remember his life on earth, we have the very opposite. Instead of drinking of the stream which brings oblivion of the past, Christ shows us that the souls of men must drink of the stream which makes the past live again: "Son, remember!" How strange, and yet how terrible, is the vitality of sin! You may have changed; life may have changed; but your sin comes back unchanged.

What is this power that recollects the distant past,
And makes this hour unlike the last,
Pregnant with life, calling across the deep
To things that slumber, men that sleep?

They rise by number, and with stealthy tread,
Like a battalion's tread, marshal our dead.
This is the gift men cannot bargain with, nor shift;
Which went with Dives down to hell,

With Lazarus up to heaven;
Which will not let us e'er forget
The sins of years, though washed with tears.
Whate'er it be, men call it "Memory."

-- Author unknown

* * *

REMEMBRANCE

2013 -- NOW, SHE IS FORGOTTEN

One night a frightful storm raged around the Longstone Lighthouse. A steamer crashed on a neighboring rock. In the lighthouse was a young girl of twenty-two, and her father. They immediately launched their little boat in that tempestuous sea, and the young girl took the oars.

After desperate efforts, they reached the rocks to which nine poor wretches clung. They took them into their boat, and such was the violence of wind and wave that it took them nearly the whole day to get back to the lighthouse. There they safely landed them, and for three days and nights they tended and consoled them. Is there one who has not heard that young girl's name? It was Grace Darling, and from the humblest cottage of England, her heroic deed awakened a transport of enthusiasm. -- Farrar

*Apparently when Farrar wrote this illustration, Grace Darling was widely known in her country. Today, no doubt very few, if any, know of her, and it really doesn't matter whether we know of her or not. Earthly fame may sometimes be deserved, but the one real Hero we must never forget is Christ. Knowing of that "Grace" will get us nowhere, but receiving, remembering, and retaining the "grace" of Christ will qualify us for transport into the eternal presence of the King of kings. -- Duane V. Maxey

* * *

REMEMBRANCE

2014 -- POWELL'S EPITAPH

Some time ago I went to visit the first important battlefield of the Civil War, Rich Mountain, in the mountains of West Virginia, where in July, 1861 General George B. McClellan defeated the Confederate troops under General Robert Garnett. The battlefield, the name of which once rang throughout the country, is in the midst of a wild mountain solitude. On one of the outcropping rocks on the farm where the battle was fought, you can read the name "Powell." The story is that a certain soldier, mortally wounded, asked by his comrades if there was anything that they could do for him answered, "No, only knock the cap off this rock." When they had done so, he asked for his bayonet. Taking the bayonet in his hand, he cut upon the face of the rock with the point of the bayonet the letters of his name. He did not wish to die in that mountain desolation unremembered and unnoted. It was a beautiful and pathetic tribute to man's desire to be remembered, and to his instinct for immortality. -- McCartney

* * *

REMEMBRANCE

2015 -- THE DESIRE TO BE REMEMBERED

Man craves the knowledge and the sympathy of the Eternal. During a lull between the charges at the second Battle of Cold Harbor in June, 1864, the only battle that Grant said he regretted fighting, officers going through the Union ranks saw the men sitting on the grass under the trees or in the thickets sewing their names on their sleeves. Why were they doing that? It was because they expected to die in the ensuing charge and shrank from the oblivion of a nameless grave. They wanted someone in the hills of western Pennsylvania, Vermont, New York, or Wisconsin, to know who they were, how they had died, and where their bodies rested. Yes, the

human heart wants to know that there is an ear to hear, and an eye to witness its sorrows, its conflicts, and its struggles. -- McCartney

* * *

REMEMBRANCE

2016 -- THE ONE WE MUST REMEMBER

Two Jewish rabbis, named Schamaria and Jacob, came to me at Wittenburg, desiring of me letters of safe conduct, which I granted them, and they were well pleased; only they earnestly besought me to omit thence the word "Tola," that is, "Jesus crucified," for they must needs blaspheme the name of Jesus. They said: "'Tis most wonderful that so many thousands of innocent people have been slaughtered, of whom no mention is made, while Jesus, the crucified, must always be remembered." -- Luther's Table Talk

But those thousands of others who were crucified, or unjustly slain, were not "the Lamb of God," and that is what makes the difference. We dare not forget Him, for it is through Him alone that we have eternal salvation! -- Duane V. Maxey

* * *

REPENTANCE

2017 -- CANCER CORRECTIVE

Patrick Reynolds has signed on to help the American Lung Association's anti-smoking campaign. So what? He is the grandson of the founder R. J. Reynolds. Reason -- to "make up for the damage my family has done."

* * *

REPENTANCE

2018 -- DEATH-BED REPENTANCE

Do not try a deathbed repentance, my brother. I have stood by many a deathbed, and few indeed have there been where I could have believed that the man was in a condition physically (to say nothing of anything else) clearly to see and grasp the message of the Gospel. I know that God's mercy is boundless. I know that a man going -- swept down that great Niagara -- if, before his little skiff tilts over into the awful rapids, he can make one great bound with all his strength and reach the solid ground, I know he may be saved. It is an awful risk to run. A moment's miscalculation, and skiff and voyager alike are whelming in the green chaos below, and come up mangled into nothing far away down yonder over the white turbulent foam. "One was saved upon the cross," as the old divines used to tell us, "that none might despair, and only one, that none might presume." -- A. Maclaren

* * *

REPENTANCE

2019 -- ENOUGH TO QUIT

A Sunday School teacher once asked a class what was meant by the word "repentance." A little boy put up his hand and said, "It is being sorry for your sins." A little girl also raised her hand and said, "It is being sorry enough to quit." -- Donald Barnhouse

* * *

REPENTANCE

2020 -- GOD'S DEADLINE

There is a time, we know not when,
A point we know not where,
That marks the destiny of men,
To glory or despair.

There is a line by us unseen,
That crosses every path
The hidden boundary between
God's patience and His wrath.

To pass that limit is to die:
To die as if by stealth:
It does not quench the beaming eye,
Nor pale the glow of health.

The conscience may be still at ease,
The spirits light and gay;
That which is pleasing still may please,
And care be thrust away.

He feels, perchance, that all is well,
And every fear is calmed;
He lives, he dies, he wakes in hell
Not only doomed but dammed.

Oh, where is that mysterious morn
By which our path is crossed;
Beyond which God himself hath sworn,
That he who goes is lost?

An answer from the skies is sent
Ye who from God depart,
While it is called today repent,
And harden not your heart.

* * *

REPENTANCE

2021 -- I STILL THINK YOU'RE DUMB!

A small boy dialed "O" and asked the operator to call a number for him. He didn't speak clearly, so she couldn't understand him. After repeating it four times, he blurted out, "You operators are dumb," and slammed down the receiver. Hearing this, his mother was shocked. She called the operator and made the boy apologize. Later, when his mother left the house, the lad got on the phone again. "Is this the same operator I talked to a little while ago?" "Yes," came the reply. "Well," said the boy, "I still think you're dumb!"

That boy's apology reminds me of a missing element in the lives of many Christians -- genuine repentance. Facing up to sin is often forced on them by getting caught or by embarrassing circumstances. But there's no change of mind, no new action, no new motivation.

* * *

REPENTANCE

2022 -- MORE TIME FOR REPENTANCE

John Hardonk, while on ship board, dreamed one night that the day of judgment had come and that the roll of the ships crew was called, except his own name, and that this crew were all banished; and in his dream he asked the reader why his own name was omitted; and he was told it was to give him more opportunity for repentance. He woke up a different man. He became illustrious for Christian attainment. -- T. De Witt Talmage

* * *

REPENTANCE

2023 -- REPENTANCE VERSES REFORMATION

Reformation is no more the whole of Christianity than cultivation constitutes the whole of successful farming. A farmer may plow and harrow his ground every day of the summer, and not permit a single weed to grow; that would be a high state of cultivation; but if he plants no seed in this field, he will gather no crop in the autumn. Simply ridding your life of the weeds of undesirable habits without planting the seeds of Christianity in your heart-garden is as great a folly

as for a farmer to cultivate his ground all summer and sow no seed. Repentance pulls up the weeds now growing and plants the seeds of righteousness. The man who attempts to improve by reforming is white washing his life, while the one who repents washes white his life, and there is a vast difference between the two processes. Morality can never save anybody. Painting the pump does not kill the typhoid germs and purify the water in the well. You may have literary circles and culture clubs, Carnegie libraries and schools of art, but this city will never be won to Christ until there is brought about an old time revival of genuine repentance. -- O. A. Newlin

* * *

REPENTANCE

2024 -- THE FIRST TO BURN

Thomas Cranmer was the archbishop of Canterbury from 1532 until 1556. During his tenure he strongly promoted the translation and dissemination of the English Bible. When he offended Queen Mary I, she had him tried as a heretic, excommunicated, and burned at the stake. Prior to his death Cranmer recanted of his convictions, but when tied to the stake at Oxford he strongly disavowed his earlier action. So deep was Cranmer's regret at having signed the recantation that he promised that the hand which had signed the document would be the first to burn.

The brave archbishop kept his promise, holding his right hand steadfastly in the flames.

* * *

REPENTANCE

2025 -- THE KEY TO PARADISE

The last time I was at Baalbek, that most imposing and stupendous monument of the ancient world, I recalled Hood's story "Paradise and the Peri." The peri had been promised that she could get back into paradise if she brought to the gates of heaven that which was most precious to God. All over the world, she searched for that treasure. She brought first the last drop of blood from a dying patriot's heart, and then a maiden's kiss of sacrificial love implanted on the brow of her dying lover. But the gates of heaven opened not. Her gifts were refused. Then, near the ruins of Baalbek, she saw a child kneeling in prayer by a fountain. As the child was praying, a man rode up on his horse and dismounted to quench his thirst at the fountain. On his face, was stamped all manner of iniquity and coarseness and crime. But as he stooped to lift the water to his lips, he saw the child kneeling in prayer. In a flash, the hard face softened and changed and a tear flowed down his cheek; for he recalled the day when he too was as innocent as the child and prayed for himself as the child was now praying. It was that penitential tear that opened the gates of paradise to the lost spirit. -- McCartney

* * *

REPENTANCE

2026 -- THE MISSING INGREDIENT

"For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted. 2 Corinthians 7:10 A small boy dialed "0" and asked the operator to call a number for him. He didn't speak clearly, so she couldn't understand him. After repeating it four times, he blurted out, "You operators are dumb, " and slammed down the receiver. Hearing this, his mother was shocked. She called the operator and made the boy apologize. Later, when his mother left the house, the lad got on the phone again. "Is this the same operator I talked to a little while ago?" "Yes, " came the reply. "Well, " said the boy, "I still think you're dumb!" That boy's apology reminds me of a missing ingredient in the lives of many professed Christians -- genuine repentance. Facing up to sin is often forced on them by getting caught or by embarrassing circumstances, but there's no change of mind, no new action, no new motivation. Biblical repentance reestablishes our credibility with the world and renews our fellowship with the Lord. The seven "whats" of 2 Corinthians 7:11 are seven marks of godly sorrow: (1) Earnestness to do the right. (2) Eagerness to clear oneself through apology. (3) Indignation against sin. (4) Fear of God. (5) Intense desire to see right accomplished. (6) Zeal to correct what's wrong. (7) Readiness to see that wrongdoing is punished.

* * *

REPENTANCE

2027 -- THE ONE WHO FORGAVE THE WOMAN

Robert Falconer tells the story of his witnessing among destitute people in a certain city and of reading them the story of the woman who wiped Jesus' feet with her tears. While he was reading he heard a loud sob and looked up at a young, thin girl whose face was disfigured by smallpox. After he spoke a few words of encouragement to her, she said, "Will He ever come again, the One who forgave the woman? I have heard that He will come again. Will it be soon?" Falconer replied. After sobbing again uncontrollably, she said, "Sir, can't He wait a little while? My hair ain't long enough yet to wipe His feet."

The person who sees the greatness of his own forgiveness by God's love will himself in love be forgiving. He forgives in love because his heavenly Father has forgiven in love and he desires to be an imitator of His Father.

* * *

REPENTANCE

2028 -- TRUETT'S TRAGEDY

George Truett, who for many years was an effective preacher in Dallas, became a changed man through a terrible misfortune. In his youth he accidentally shot and killed a close friend while hunting. The shock of what he had done weighed heavily upon him, but he refused to let it defeat

him. He determined to live for God and endeavored to do the work of two men. People who knew him said that his early experience was one of the reasons he glowed with a passion for the lost and gave himself so unstintingly to God's service.

* * *

REPENTANCE

2029 -- TURNING POINTS

Life is full of turning-points, from bad to good, from good to bad, or from bad to worse, from good to better, in choosing or changing an occupation or in preparing to make our calling the greatest possible success:

Are there not, dear Michael,
Two points in the adventure of the diver:
One, when a beggar, he prepares to plunge?
One, when a prince, he rises with his pearl?
Festus, I plunge.

* * *

Two paths lie open for each life;
One leads through danger, toil and strife,
But upward goes
To shining heights whose rising sun,
When once the lofty steep is won,
No setting knows.

The other path, vine-clad and green,
Scarce lets its gentle slope be seen
But downward goes
To depths unknown, whose setting sun,
In baleful shadows dark and dun,
No rising knows.

-- E. J. B.

* * *

REPENTANCE

2030 -- WHAT JIM BAKKER NOW ADMITS

Writing to friends from his Minnesota prison cell, Jim Bakker has denounced the riches-through-faith creed that fueled the rise and fall of his PTL empire.

Fifteen years after founding the religious-entertainment complex near Fort Mill, S. C., and three years after going to prison for defrauding many of those who followed him there, Bakker now admits God doesn't just bless the rich.

"If that be the case," Bakker wrote recently, "then gambling casino owners and drug kingpins and movie stars are blessed of God.... I have asked God to forgive me and I ask all who have sat under my ministry to forgive me for preaching a gospel emphasizing earthly prosperity."

The former televangelist, who is serving an 18-year sentence for bilking followers out of millions of dollars, had apologized previously only for hurting those who trusted him. -- Columbus Dispatch

* * *

REPENTANCE

2031 -- WHAT LEAD HIM TO REPENTANCE

In "The Silence of Dean Maitland," the author tells how the dean fell into sin and then committed one sin after another to cover up his first sin; and worst of all permitted an innocent man to be punished and imprisoned in his stead. All kinds of temporal adversities broke over him. He lost his wife and children; his home became a wilderness; yet he would not repent. He said, "I cannot, I will not, I dare not, I must not, repent." But at length, the man, who had spent a great part of his life in prison for the other's crime, wrote him a letter telling him of his forgiveness. It was that letter that broke his heart and brought him to repentance. "God called to me," he said, "through many years, by many judgments; but I repented not -- until I was forgiven." -- McCartney

* * *

REPENTANCE -- DUTY OF

2032 -- REPENT NOW

The story is told of a famous rabbi who was walking with some of his disciples when one of them asked, "Rabbi, when should a man repent?" The rabbi calmly replied, "You should be sure you repent on the last day of your life." "But," protested several of his disciples, "we can never be sure which day will be the last day of our life." The famous rabbi smiled and said, "The answer to that problem is very simple. Repent now."

* * *

REPROACH

2033 -- POLYCARP BORE THE REPROACH OF CHRIST

Polycarp, who was a disciple of St. John, manifested the Spirit of Christ under persecution. When he was arraigned for trial, the proconsul said, "Reproach Christ, and I will release thee." Polycarp, looking upward toward heaven, said, "Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He hath never wronged me, and how can I blaspheme my King Who hath saved me?" "I have wild beasts," said the proconsul, "and I will expose you to them unless you recant." "Call them," said the martyr. "I will tame your spirit by fire," said the Roman. "You threaten me," said Polycarp, "With the fire which burns only for a moment, and are yourself ignorant of the fire of eternal punishment reserved for the ungodly." Soon after, being bound on the burning stake, he thanked God for the honor of the martyr's fate. -- Treasury

* * *

REST

2034 -- RELAXATION IS SOMETIMES LEGITIMATE

According to tradition, when the apostle John was bishop in Ephesus, his hobby was raising pigeons. On one occasion an Ephesian elder passed his house as he returned from hunting. When he saw John playing with one of his birds, he gently chided the old bishop for spending his time so frivolously. John looked at his critic's bow and remarked that the string was loosened. "Yes," said the huntsman, "I also loosen the string of my bow when it's not in use. If it always stayed tight, it would lose its rebounding quality and fail me in the hunt." "And I," said John, "am now relaxing the bow of my mind so that I may be better able to shoot the arrows of divine truth."

* * *

REST -- PHYSICAL

2035 -- HE DIDN'T PLAN TO BE LIKE THE DEVIL

I smiled recently when I read about an angry church member who blustered up to his minister, saying, "I phoned you Monday, but I couldn't get you." The preacher explained that it was his day off. "What? A day off? The devil never takes a day off!" exclaimed the member with holier-than-thou indignation. "That's right," said the minister, "and if I didn't take any 'time out,' I would be just like him!"

Yes, we do need to rest. As Vance Havner used to say: "if we don't come apart, we'll come apart!"

* * *

REST -- PHYSICAL

2036 -- HE RAN INTO HIS OWN CANNON SHELLS

Several years ago, newspapers told how a new Navy jet fighter shot itself down. Flying at supersonic speed, it ran into cannon shells it had fired only a few seconds before. The jet was traveling too fast!

You are also traveling too fast, if you don't have time to worship God in regular church services, if you don't have time to read the Bible, if you don't have time to pray.

If you're neglecting any of these, you're probably traveling too fast to hear the sound of God's voice. You can't tell whether you are in the center of His will. Better slow down before, like the jet, you shoot yourself down.

* * *

REST -- SPIRITUAL

2037 -- CHRIST, THE TRUE YOKEFELLOW

On one occasion F. B. Meyer visited D. L. Moody in Northfield, Massachusetts. Moody, showing Meyer a team of oxen, said that whenever one of those oxen was being yoked in, the other, which might be on the far side of the farmyard, would come trotting up and stand beside the other one until it was yoked in also. Meyer then made this encouraging application to us in our relationship to Christ: "Jesus stands today with the yoke upon His shoulder. He calls to each one and says, 'Come and share My yoke, and let us plow together the long furrow of your life. I will be a true yokefellow to you. The burden shall be on Me.'"

That's exactly what Jesus promised us in Matthew 11:29.

* * *

REST -- SPIRITUAL

2038 -- FINDING REST IN CHRIST

The Princess Elizabeth, daughter of King Charles I of England, lies buried in Newport Church, in the Isle of Wight. During the time of her father's troubles she was a prisoner in Carisbrook Castle, in the same beautiful island. While there, she had a long spell of sickness. She was found one day, dead in her bed with her Bible open before her, and her finger resting on these words, "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." A monument in Newport, erected by Queen Victoria, represents the young princess with her head bowed in death, and her hand rests on a marble book before her, her finger pointing to the words.
-- Dictionary Of Illustrations

* * *

REST -- SPIRITUAL

2039 -- THE SECOND REST

"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me... and you will find rest unto your souls. Matt. 11:29 When a person trusts Christ for salvation, he experiences a deep, settled peace. He knows that his sins are forgiven and that he is on his way to heaven. But he still may lack peace in facing the trials and difficulties of life. F. B. Meyer talked about this problem in his book "The Christ Life for Your Life." He wrote, "There are tens of thousands of Christians who have got the first rest, but have not got the second. They could look death in the face without wavering, but they cannot look panic, disaster, bereavement, pain, or trial in the face without disquiet." Yet Matthew 11:29 clearly shows that there is a way to find "rest for your souls." On one occasion F. B. Meyer visited with D. L. Moody in Northfield, Massachusetts. Moody, showing Meyer a team of oxen, said that whenever one of the oxen was being yoked in, the other, which might be on the far side of the farm yard, would come trotting over and stand beside the first, ready to be yoked in also. Meyer then made this encouraging application for believers in their relationship to Christ: "Jesus stands today with the yoke upon His shoulder. He calls to each one and says, 'Come and share My yoke, and let us plow together the long furrow of your life. I will be a true yokefellow to you. The burden shall be on Me.'"

* * *

REST OF THE STORY

2040 -- MAY BE PURPOSESELY WITHHELD

I read recently about some newlyweds who had just moved into their place with their wedding gifts. Then, an unknown benefactor sent them tickets to a local show. While still wondering who the person was, they used the tickets, and, upon returning to their place, they discovered that all of their wedding gifts had been stolen in their absence. They found a note saying: "Now you know". The generous giver turned out to be a conniving, selfish thief! Even thus, satan withholds both his identity and his motive when he offers gullible souls "free" tickets to the pleasures and attractions of this world. His motive is to rob the revelers of every good and perfect gift of God, including their soul's salvation, while they enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. For satan's victims at the Judgment, the realization that "Now you know" will be a shock unparalleled in magnitude by any sad surprise that sinners have experienced on earth, for in that hour they will not be able to recover even one gift of God which satan has stolen from them. Their loss will be eternal. -- Duane V. Maxey

* * *

REST OF THE STORY

2041 -- MAY EXPLAIN THE SILENCE

On the night of March 29, 1848, Niagara Falls completely stopped, mysteriously and unbelievably. Accustomed to hearing the constant roar of the falls, local residents were both awakened and alarmed by the unusual, pervading silence. People went to their doors, frightened by

this strange phenomenon they couldn't identify. As the realization that the falls had stopped came, some hurriedly dressed and ran to the river. Flares and torches revealed, instead of the torrent, stretches of mud and naked boulders, and by the next afternoon spectators lined the banks exploring the exposed river bed. To some, the mystery of this sudden "turning off" of the river seemed to be an ominous portent, and nightfall found most of the churches packed with people praying or talking in frightened voices about the end of the world. Fear grew into the proportions of panic. Then, from up the river bed came the low growling of an approaching wall of water which soon, in an unbroken torrent, swept again over the brink of the falls. After the familiar roar of Niagara Falls returned, people began to relax. Fears subsided, and faces which had been white and strained softened. But what had cut off the river and quieted their surroundings? That..is the rest of the story. During the day of March 29th, tons of ice from the Lake Erie ice field had jammed at the rivers entrance, damming up the river for almost 30 hours until the ice shifted and the dam broke up. Coldness toward Christ brings quietness from Christ, but renewed closeness to "The Sun of Righteousness" can melt and move aside spiritual ice jams, release the river of God's Spirit, and restore the familiar, fear-removing sound of His voice. cf. Matt. 24:12 (story from. E. Smith, R. D.) -- Duane V. Maxey

* * *

REST OF THE STORY

2042 -- MAY REVEAL RELATIONSHIP -- OR LACK OF IT

A man entered a barbershop with a small boy and explained that since he had an appointment in the neighborhood he would like his hair cut first. This done, he handed the boy up into a barber chair, urged patience upon him, and departed. The barber cut the boy's hair and sat him in a waiting chair, but after half an hour the man had not returned. "Don't worry," said the barber, "I'm sure your father will be back soon." The boy looked startled. "He isn't my father," he said. "He just came up to me in the street and said, 'Come along, let's both get a haircut.'" Without endeavoring to make this comparison match in every detail, this application: The honest confession of many concerning their relationship with God would be: "He is not my Father". And, many who have served and groomed a religious "chairman" or leader who is not a true son of God will find themselves "clipped" at the Judgment of their hoped-for, eternal reward. -- Duane V. Maxey

* * *

RESTITUTION

2043 -- AN EFFECTIVE PREACHER OF RESTITUTION

In the course of his preaching, W. P. Nicholson insisted on the need for restitution where something had to be put right with another person. After one mission held in East Belfast early in 1923, many tools and pieces of equipment which had been purloined earlier were returned to the shipyard, and in such quantities that an additional store had to be provided to hold them. A letter to the evangelist from the management of another firm acknowledged receipt of tools received

from one of their own men who signed himself "Ex-worker," and thanked him for his influence in the case, adding that they had heard of similar cases directly attributable to his ministry. -- S. W. Murray

* * *

RESTITUTION -- PARTIAL

2044 -- IF I STILL HAVE TROUBLE SLEEPING

Gentlemen:

Enclosed you will find a check for \$150. I cheated on my income tax return last year and have not been able to sleep ever since. If I still have trouble sleeping I will send you the rest.

Sincerely,
A Tax Payer

* * *

RESTORATION

2045 -- GRACE TO SOAR AS HIGH AGAIN

One pastor writes of a man he had in his congregation, a Christian worker, a man used of God, but who unfortunately at an evil hour slipped badly. Oh, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. This man fell and he was serving a 7 year sentence in one of our penal institutions. Through his encounter with a Godly Barnabas- like pastor this man was led to know the recovering power of the precious blood of Christ. On the fly leaf of his bible he wrote: "The soul that comes to Jesus through failure, shame, or pain, by His wondrous love and mercy may soar as high again." A sense of need and the spirit of repentance is a vessel into which God wills to pour himself in recovering grace.

* * *

RESTORATION

2046 -- THE ESTRANGEMENT WAS GONE

Stanley Jones writes about a crucial moment in his life when he found himself on his way to what could have been a spiritual disaster:

For months after my conversion, I was running under cloudless skies. And then suddenly I tripped, almost fell, pulled back this side of the sin, but was shaken and humiliated that I could come that close to sin. I thought I was emancipated and found I wasn't. I went to the class meeting -- I'm grateful that I didn't stay away -- went, but my music had gone. I had hung my harp on a

weeping willow tree. As the others spoke of their joys and victories of the week, I sat there with the tears rolling down my cheeks. I was heartbroken. After the others had spoken, John Zink, the class leader, said: "Now, Stanley, tell us what is the matter." I told them I couldn't, but would they please pray for me? Like one man they fell to their knees, and they lifted me back to the bosom of God by faith and love. When we got up from our knees, I was reconciled to my heavenly Father, to the group, and to myself. I was reconciled. The universe opened its arms and took me in again. The estrangement was gone. I took my harp from the willow tree and began to sing again -- the Song of Moses and the Lamb, especially the Lamb. The cross was my refuge and my release. That was a very crucial moment in my Song of Ascents, the moment when I lost my music. My destiny was in the hands of that group. I was a very bruised reed; suppose they had broken me? I was a smoldering wick; suppose they had snuffed me out? Just a criticism: "I told you so. Too good to be true. He was riding for a fall." But they never uttered a criticism, or even thought of one, as far as I could see. The reaction was nothing but redemptive love. That group became redemptive. I saw and experience the power of redemptive love incarnate in a group. -- A Song of Ascents

* * *

RESTORATION

2047 -- THE MASTER'S HAND

'Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste much time on the old violin,
But held it up with a smile.

'What am I bidden, good folks, he cried,
'Who'll start bidding for me?
A dollar, a dollar now two, only two
Two dollars and who'll make it three?

'Three dollars, once, three dollars, twice,
Going for three' but no
From the room far back a gray haired man
Came forward and picked up the bow;

Then wiping the dust from the old violin,
And tightening up all the strings,
He played a melody pure and sweet,
As sweet as the angels sing.

"The music ceased, and the auctioneer,
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said: 'What am I bid for the old violin?'
And he held it up with the bow,

'A thousand dollars and who'll make it two?
Two thousand, and who'll make it three?
Three thousand once, and three thousand twice
And going, and gone,' said he.

"The people cheered, but some of them cried,
'We do not quite understand
What changed its worth?' The man replied,
'The touch of the master's hand.'

And many a man with life out of tune,
And battered and torn with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to a thoughtless crowd,
Much like the old violin.

"A mess of pottage, a glass of wine,
A game and he travels on,
He's going once, and he's going twice,
He is going, and almost gone.

But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd,
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul, and the change that's wrought
By the touch of the Master's hand."

-- Myra Brooks Welch

* * *

RESTORATION

2048 -- THE MASTER'S TOUCH

The famous clock in Strasburg Cathedral had a mechanism so complicated that it seemed to the ignorant and superstitious almost a work of superhuman skill. The abused and offended maker, while as yet unpaid for his work, came one day and touched its secret springs, and it stopped. All the patience and ingenuity of a nation's mechanics and artisans failed to restore its disordered mechanism and set it in motion.

Afterward, when his grievances were redressed, that maker came again, touched the inner springs, and set it again in motion, and all its multiplied parts revolved again obedient to his will. When thus by a touch, he suspended and restored those marvelous movements, he gave to any doubting mind proof that he was the maker, and certainly the master, of that clock.

When Jesus of Nazareth brings to a stop the mechanism of nature, makes its mighty wheels turn back, or in any way arrests its grand movement -- more than all, when He cannot only stop, but start again, the mysterious clock of human life -- He gives to an honest mind overwhelming proof that He is God. For a malignant power might arrest or destroy, but only God could reconstruct and restore. -- A. T. Pierson.

* * *

RESURRECTION

2049 -- HER GRAVE WAS OPENED BY A TREE SEED

In a cemetery in Hanover, Germany, is a grave on which were placed huge slabs of granite and marble cemented together and fastened with heavy steel clasps. It belongs to a woman who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. Yet strangely, she directed in her will that her grave be made so secure that if there were a resurrection, it could not reach her. On the marker were inscribed these words: "This burial place must never be opened." In time, a seed, covered over by the stones, began to grow. Slowly it pushed its way through the soil and out from beneath them. As the trunk enlarged, the great slabs were gradually shifted so that the steel clasps were wrenched from their sockets. A tiny seed had become a tree that had pushed aside the stones.

The dynamic life force contained in that little seed is a faint reflection of the tremendous power of God's creative word that someday will call to life the bodies of all who are in their graves. He will also bring back every person drowned at sea, cremated, or destroyed in some other way. This is no problem to the One who made something out of nothing when He spoke the universe into existence. Unbelief cannot deter the resurrection. But faith in the risen Christ opens the door to blessings that His resurrection guarantees -- a glorious new spiritual body and a home in heaven. In new bodies we will be reunited with saved loved ones to live with Jesus throughout all eternity.

* * *

RESURRECTION

2050 -- HIS DEATH CERTIFICATE WAS CANCELLED

Bucharest -- A Romanian woman fainted recently when she opened her front door and found her husband standing there.

The Romanian weekly Tinerama says it all started when a man named Neagu choked on a fish bone, stopped breathing and collapsed.

The family doctor, knowing Neagu's heart condition, didn't think twice about proclaiming the 71-year-old dead of a heart attack. But three days later, gravediggers at the cemetery heard someone knock on wood.

They opened Neagu's coffin to find him surrounded by wilted flowers but very much alive. When Neagu arrived home his wife, fearing he was a ghost, barred him from spending nights at home. It took Neagu three weeks to convince the authorities to cancel his death certificate from their registers. -- Servant

* * *

RESURRECTION

2051 -- THE FORMER TENANT NOT DEAD

Passing by a house a short time since, I noticed the sign, "This House For Rent." How is this? Is the former tenant dead?" I asked. "Oh no, sir," said the caretaker; "he has moved to a larger house in a better situation." Even thus, as we look upon the clay tenement in which some loved Christian friend has dwelt, we answer, "No, he is not dead, but rather, he has moved into the enduring house in the better country, where the better resurrection is, and where eternal life is." -- Henry Varley

* * *

RESURRECTION -- OF CHRIST

2052 -- A FEAT HE COULD NOT PERFORM

Larevellere Lepeaux, once confided to Talleyrand his chagrin. He had labored to bring into vogue a sort of improved Christianity, which should be both a benevolent and a rational religion. With expressions of mortification, he admitted that he had failed, for the skeptical age would have nothing to do with his improved religion. "What, my friend, shall I do?" he mournfully asked. The wily ex-bishop and diplomat politely condoled with the disappointed reformer. He hardly knew, he said, what to advise in a matter so difficult as the improvement of Christianity. "Still," said he, after a moments pause, and with a smile, there is one plan you might try." His friend's attitude and look showed how eager he was to be advised. But what would the advice be? There was a somewhat prolonged silence before Talleyrand answered. "I recommend to you," he said, "to be crucified for mankind, and to rise again on the third day!"

It was a lightning flash, and the reformer stood, at least for the moment, awed and reverent before the stupendous fact suggested by the great diplomat. -- Dictionary Of Illustrations

* * *

RESURRECTION -- OF CHRIST

2053 -- BECAUSE THE TOMB WAS EMPTY

One warm spring afternoon near Easter, a teacher gave a large plastic egg to each of her students. Then she sent them outside to find signs of life and put them inside their egg.

Soon they returned. In one was a butterfly. In another was an ant. Others contained flowers, twigs, blades of grass. But one egg had nothing in it. Everyone knew whose it was -- it belonged to a boy with Down's syndrome. Some of the kids laughed at him. The teacher asked him why he had not put any signs of life in his egg. He said quietly, "Because the tomb was empty." That boy knew a profound truth -- Easter is more than a celebration of nature's life cycle.

* * *

RESURRECTION -- OF CHRIST

2054 -- DON'T FORGET

A man was going down a street when in a store window he saw a very beautiful picture of the crucifixion. As he gazed spellbound at the vividly pictured story, he suddenly became conscious that at his side stood a young boy. The boy, too, was gazing at the picture, and his tense expression made the man know that "The Crucifixion" had really gripped the eager little soul. Touching the boy on the shoulder, the man said, "Sonny, what does it mean?" "Doncha know?" he answered, his face full of the marvel of the man's ignorance. "That there man is Jesus, an' them others is Roman soldiers, an' the woman what's cryin' is His mother, an'" he added, "they killed 'im!"

The man did not want to move from in front of that impressive piece of artwork but he had other things he had to do, so he turned and walked away. In a few moments he heard footsteps on the street behind him, and there came rushing up the boy. "Say, mister," he exclaimed breathlessly, "I forgot to tell you, but He rose again!"

* * *

RESURRECTION -- OF CHRIST

2055 -- MICHELANGELO WAS RIGHT

On one occasion Michelangelo turned to his fellow artists and said with frustration in his voice, "Why do you keep filling gallery after gallery with endless pictures on the one theme of Christ in weakness, Christ on the cross, and most of all, Christ hanging dead?" he asked. "Why do you concentrate on the passing episode as if it were the last work, as if the curtain dropped down there on disaster and defeat? That dreadful scene lasted only a few hours. But to the unending eternity Christ is alive; Christ rules and reigns and triumphs!"

Michelangelo was right. Even though the cross is vitally important because of the redemption Jesus accomplished for us there, we must not emphasize His death to the exclusion of His resurrection victory. We should think of Him now in His glorified state in heaven.

* * *

RESURRECTION -- OF CHRIST ANNOUNCED

2056 -- THE RESURRECTION SPELLED VICTORY

General Wellington commanded forces at Waterloo. When the battle was over, he spelled out by code, "Wellington defeated...", yet fog set in, and people only saw news of "defeat." The fog cleared and the message continued. "Wellington defeated Napoleon at Waterloo." People looked at the death of Christ and said "defeat." Yet, at the Resurrection, God's message was finished. The resurrection spelled victory.

* * *

RESURRECTION -- PROOFS OF CHRIST'S

2057 -- HE APPEARED TO THEM ALIVE

Now there was about this time Jesus a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him many Jews, and also many of the Greeks. This man was the Christ. And when Pilate had condemned him to the cross, those who had loved him from the first did not forsake him for he appeared to them alive on the third day, the divine prophets having spoken these and thousands of other wonderful things about him. And even now, the race of Christians, so named from him, has not died out. -- Josephus

* * *

RESURRECTION -- PROOFS OF CHRIST'S

2058 -- NO TRACE OF HUMAN REMAINS

When the Garden Tomb was discovered in 1885, the godly General Gordon was convinced that this was the place where the body of Jesus had lain. There is a traditional tomb inside the wall of modern Jerusalem, but no certainty attaches to the site.

The Garden Tomb, hidden for centuries, was covered with rubbish twenty feet high. When they first cleared the spot, with great caution they gathered all the dust and debris within the tomb and carefully shipped it to the Scientific Association of Great Britain. Every part of it was analyzed, but there was no trace of human remains. If this is the real tomb of Christ, then Jesus was the first to be laid there and he was also the last. -- Alliance Weekly

* * *

RETALIATION

2059 -- RETALIATION REPUDIATED

An incident well worth repeating, is told of General Robert E. Lee, the Confederate officer during the American Civil War. Jefferson Davis once asked him what he thought of a certain officer in the army, as he had an important place he wanted filled by a trustworthy man. Lee gave the officer an excellent recommendation and he was immediately promoted to the position. Some of Lee's friends told him that the officer had said some very bitter things against him and were surprised at the General's recommendation. "I was not asked," said Lee, "for the officer's opinion of me, but my opinion of him." Only a noble heart could prompt such action. In praying, we are told to love our enemies, but in our everyday life, we too often love only those who love us. -- Rev. W. W. Landrum

* * *

RETALIATION

2060 -- THE OTHER CHEEK

Richard Weaver, a Christian worker, earned his living in the mines. He had the higher priority, however, of trying to bring his associates in contact with the savior and His soul-restoring Word. While most of the men were indifferent, one became offended by his witness, and finally exclaimed, "I'm sick of your constant preaching. I've a good mind to smack you in the face!" "Go ahead if it will make you feel better," replied Weaver. The man immediately struck him a stinging blow. The Christian did not retaliate but turned the other cheek. Again the unbeliever struck him and then walked away, cursing under his breath. Weaver called after him, "I forgive you, and still pray that the Lord will save you!" The next morning his assailant was waiting for him when he came to work "Oh, Dick," he said, his voice filled with emotion, "do you really forgive me for what I did yesterday?" "Certainly," said Weaver extending his hand. As he told him again the message of salvation, God opened the man's heart, and he received Christ. (Matt. 5:39)

* * *

RETRIBUTION

2061 -- AN INVISIBLE PAINTER

A rich landlord once cruelly oppressed a poor widow. Her son a little boy of eight years saw it. Years later, he became a painter and painted a life-likeness of the dark scene. He placed it where the man saw it. The cruel landlord turned pale, trembled in every joint, and offered any sum to purchase it that he might put it out of sight.

There is an invisible Painter, drawing on the canvas of the soul a life-likeness reflecting correctly all the passions and actions of our spiritual history on earth. In eternity, He will reveal them to every man. We must meet our earth-life again. -- J. C. F. Pittman

* * *

RETRIBUTION

2062 -- RETRIBUTION STRUCK AT ONE O'CLOCK

There is an old legend of a clock tower which was erected ages ago in one of the kingdoms of Europe. It was the highest achievement of a world famous architect. For the clock, he designed an intricate mechanism for striking the hours on a great bell: a bronze figure was to glide up noiselessly and strike the hours on the bell. When the metal for the bell was being poured into the mold, one of the workmen made a mistake which might have ruined the bell; and in his anger the architect took a hammer and struck the workman dead. A piece of the man's skull flew into the metal and left a flaw there which the architect did not discover until the day the tower was to be dedicated.

On the appointed day and at the appointed hour, the king and his court and all the people were assembled on the plain beneath the tower waiting for the bell to strike the hour of one. As the time approached, the crowd became still. It counted the minutes and then the seconds. But when one o'clock came, there was no sound only a dull thud and then silence. After waiting for a time, the people went up the stairs of the tower and found the artist dead beside his bell. He had been working feverishly in an effort to repair the flaw which had been made in the bell by the fragment from the skull of the man whom he had slain, and which he had just now discovered. Intent on his work, he had not noted the time; and sharply at one the bronze figure which he had designed with his genius came noiselessly forward and lifting its heavy hammer smote. But instead of striking the bell, it struck the head of the architect. -- McCartney

* * *

RETRIBUTION

2063 -- THE BELL ON INCH CAPE ROCK

Do you remember that poem of Southey's about Sir Ralph the Rover? On the east of Scotland near Arbroath, in the old days, a good man had placed a float with a bell attached on the dangerous Inch Cape Rock, so that, the mariners hearing it, might keep away. This Sir Ralph the Rover, in a moment of devilry, cut away the float and bell. It was a cruel thing to do.

Years passed. Sir Ralph roamed over many parts of the world. In the end, he returned to Scotland, and as he neared the coast a storm arose. Where was he? Where was the ship drifting? Oh, that he knew where he was! Oh, that he could hear the bell on the Inch cape Rock! But years ago, in his sinful folly, he, with his own hands, had cut it away.

Hark! to that grating sound, heard amid the storm, felt amid the breakers; the ship is struck; the rock penetrates her, she goes to pieces, and with curses of rage and despair the sinner's sin has found him out; he sinks to rise no more until the great day of judgment. -- G. Litting

* * *

RETRIBUTION

2064 -- THE PREDICTION WAS FULFILLED

Ancaeus, King of the Leleges in Samos, planted a vineyard; and so heavily did he oppress his slaves that one of them, it is said, prophesied to him that he would never live to taste the wine from the grapes. When the wine was made, the King sent for his slave and said, "What do you think of your prophecy now?" The slave made answer: "There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip." The words were scarcely uttered, when Ancaeus was informed that a wild boar had broken into his vineyard and was destroying it. Ancaeus, setting down the cup untasted, hastened to attack and drive out the boar; but he was killed in the encounter.

* * *

RETURNING -- UNTO GOD

2065 -- AN OPENED DOOR AND LISTENING EARS

Dr. John Paton, the great missionary to the New Hebrides, tells us in his autobiography, a very tender incident. He tells us that his brother Walter was a sailor, that he went to sea when quite a young lad, and that after a voyage or two no more was heard of him. The sea has great secrets to tell someday, but that mother's heart could never conclude that she would never see her boy's face again. At least she resolved that, should he ever come by day or by night, there would be a welcome for him at the old fireside. And so, the last thing she did every night, before she retired to rest, was to take the door off the latch and leave it open to admit the lost boy. Should he ever come, even in the midnight, there was to be no bar against his entrance. And that mother's heart was only a faint picture of what the great Father's heart is in Jesus Christ. -- William M. Curry

* * *

RETURNING -- UNTO GOD

2066 -- MOTHER'S MESSAGE

One of the last Sundays I spent at the Bethany Sunday School in Philadelphia, an Englishman was there and spoke to the scholars. He sat down and told me this story:

A young girl had run away from home and was living a life of sin, and her mother wanted my friend to help her find her daughter. And he said: "Go home, and bring me every picture you have, and I will find her." She brought them to him, and he just dipped his pen in the ink and wrote down beneath the sweet face these words: "Come back."

Then he took those pictures down into the haunts of sin and the mission stations, and left them there. Not long after, this daughter was going into a place of sin and there she saw the face of her mother. The tears ran down her face, so that at first she could not see the words beneath, but she brushed away the tears and looked, and there they were: "Come back."

She went out to her old home at the edge of London, and when she put her hand on the latch, the door was open, and when she stepped in, her mother, with her arms about her said: "My dear child, the door has never been fastened since you went away." And that is true for you with God. The door has never been closed since you went away. It is wide open.

I lift up before you this morning, a face sweeter than any mother's face. The prophets tried to tell you about it, and they said: "Fairer than the sons of men and altogether lovely," and just below that face, I write the words: "Come back." "Go tell His disciples, and Peter." Will you come? God grant it! -- J. Wilbur Chapman

* * *

RETURNING -- UNTO GOD

2067 -- WHEN MEN RETURN UNTO GOD

D. L. Moody used to share the following story:

Dr. Andrew Bonar told me how, in the Highlands of Scotland, a sheep would often wander off into the rocks and get into places that they couldn't get out of. The grass on these mountains is very sweet and the sheep like it, and they will jump down ten or twelve feet, and then they can't jump back again and the shepherd hears them bleating in distress. They may be there for days, until they have eaten all the grass. The shepherd will wait until they are so faint that they cannot stand, and then they will put a rope around him, and he will go over and pull that sheep up out of the jaws of death.

"Why don't they go down there when the sheep first gets there? I asked.

"Ah!" he said, "they are so very foolish they would dash right over the precipice and be killed if they did."

Moody concludes his story by saying: "And this is the way with men; they won't go back to God till they have no friends and have lost everything."

* * *

REVELATIONS

2068 -- MASK TORN OFF

They have expert officials in France; their criminal system is the finest in the world. The artistic inventive faculties of the French nation are very many and very expert; and the criminal experts guide the world in that department. Just the other day, there was a telegram received in Orleans saying that a woman by the name of "Rosine" was wanted for theft, for robbery. The telegram came from Tours, and the gendarme who received the message kept his eyes open. When

the train came puffing up to the platform at Orleans, he noticed a lady, who did not look the least like a thief, descend from it. So he approached her and said: "Madam, pardon me, but in the name of the French government I want to know who you are, and from where you have come." "Oh, from Blois." "And your name?" "Marie Rachoux," she said, in her French pertness and quickness. She turned her back and was walking away when he said in a low tone "Rosine!" She turned. Caught! It was clever.

Now, what is your name? Church member, giver to the sustenance fund, true-blue Auld Kirk, seceder to the backbone, listen! "Sinner!" Be honest: turn around. It is you that I want to arrest in the name of God. Though your initials be scraped on the communion rolls of ten thousand churches, if you be not converted nor regenerated by the Spirit of God, you are on your way to the pit.

* * *

REVENGE

2069 -- A GOWN FOR A GUN

From the Business Farmer News, Scottsbluff, Nebraska: In the column under For Sale or Trade it says:

Will trade one white wedding gown size 16 -- never worn. Will trade for 38 caliber revolver.

* * *

REVENGE

2070 -- HE MADE HIMSELF LOOK BAD

I have no little admiration for William Tecumseh Sherman. I think the wreath, that the sculptor represents as resting on his brow in that noble statue at the entrance to Central Park in New York, rests there deservedly. He was not only the planner and executor of remarkable campaigns but a man of quick and scintillating intellect, not only a prophet of the times but a principal actor. But there is one incident in his life that I always read with sorrow.

On May 24, 1865, the victorious Union armies paraded through Washington. After Sherman, attended by Howard and all his staff, had ridden past the reviewing stand, Sherman dismounted and went upon the stand. He shook hands with the President Grant and each member of the Cabinet, save one. When he approached, Stanton, the secretary of war, extended his hand and Sherman publicly refused it. And worse than that, he records the incident with evident delight in his Memoirs. He had been aggrieved at Stanton's treatment of him after the surrender of Johnston. In this way, he sought to humiliate him, but the only person he really humiliated was General Sherman. -- McCartney

* * *

REVENGE

2071 -- PARDON INSTEAD OF REVENGE

Governor Stewart of Missouri recognized, in a convict he was about to pardon, a steamboat mate under whom he served as cabin boy. Stewart said, "I want you to promise that you will never again take a stick of wood and drive a sick boy out of his berth on a stormy night, because some day that boy may be governor, and you may want him to pardon you for another crime. I was that boy. Here is your pardon." -- John F. Cowan

* * *

REVENGE

2072 -- SUNK BY OWN ATTACK

During World War II the U. S. submarine Tang surfaced under the cover of darkness to fire upon a large Japanese convoy off the coast of China. Since previous raids had left the American vessel with only eight torpedoes, the accuracy of every shot was absolutely essential. The first seven missiles were right on target; but when the eighth was launched, it suddenly deviated and headed right back at their own ship. The emergency alarm to submerge rang out, but it was too late. Within a matter of seconds, the U. S. sub received a direct hit and sank almost instantly.

In much the same way we can destroy ourselves by hostility toward others. The effects of holding a grudge are very serious. Modern medicine has shown that emotions like bitterness and anger can cause problems such as headaches, backaches, allergic disorders, ulcers, high blood pressure, and heart attacks, to name just a few. When we do not love our enemies but strike back at them, we are usurping God's prerogative to mete out justice. We read in the Bible, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord!" By seeking revenge, we really inflict great harm on ourselves.

* * *

REVERENCE -- FOR CHRIST

2073 -- THE ONE TO WHOM HE BOWED

There was one consumptive old Christian man whose hacking cough sadly interfered with his powers of speech, but who grew eloquent as he warmed in exhortation and whose weather beaten face was as the face of an angel when he prayed. This poor old invalid, unequal to the work of an able-bodied laborer, was engaged at fifty cents a day in helping to unload a ship at Constitution Wharf. The owner overseeing the stevedores used frequent profanity, swearing by the name of the Saviour. Whenever he did so, old brother W___ raised his hat and bent down his head. The merchant turned with contempt towards the consumptive skeleton: "You old fool! What are

you bowing at me for?" "I am not bowing at you sir, but at the blessed name of Jesus which you are blaspheming." -- Life of Father Taylor

* * *

REVIVAL OF SIN

2074 -- HE THOUGHT IT WAS DEAD -- HE WAS WRONG!

"For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Romans 7:9 "Pali, este toro me ha matado!" "Pali, this bull has killed me!" So saying to a friend, twenty-one year old Jose Cubero collapsed and died! Well known as "Yiyo" to Spanish bullfighting fans, just three months earlier, in May 1985, "he cut a splendid figure in his suit of lights in Madrid's plaza de las ventas," and seemed destined for greatness as a matador. Suddenly, unexpectedly, a tragic error ended his spectacular career! At what proved to be his last bullfight, "after his final sword thrust he turned to the crowd, thinking the bull slain." "But the animal rallied and lunged, piercing Yiyo through the heart." (Nat. Geo. Feb. '86) The animal revived, and he died! Paul said, "I was alive...once, but...sin revived, and I died." The above victim of a revived, enraged brute lost his life, but when sin revives men often lose their souls! -- Duane V. Maxey

* * *

REVIVALS

2075 -- A HISTORY-MAKING REVIVAL BROKE OUT

In his book, English Social History, G. M. Trevelyan suggested that the darkest days in the history of American Christianity were the last two decades of the 18th century. The largest denominations were declining. The dislike for the things of God was so blatant among college students that a mock Communion service was held at Williams College. When the dean of Princeton opened a Bible to read from it at a chapel service, he found that some students had cut out the interior and inserted a pack of cards. But God was faithful, and in the early 19th century a history-making revival broke out at Hampden-Sydney College in Virginia. Soon it swept through other colleges, including Harvard, Bowdoin, Brown, Dartmouth, Middlebury -- and Williams.

Sounds like what we need today, doesn't it? Let's pray that God would move in our nation again and send a great revival.

* * *

REVIVALS

2076 -- GREAT AWAKENINGS HAVE BEGUN IN PRAYER

It is no accident that some of the great awakenings in history have begun in prayer. A prayer meeting under a haystack in a rainstorm in 1806 led to the first large-scale American

missionary efforts. In 1830 some 30,000 people were converted in Rochester, New York, under the ministry of Charles Finney; later Finney said the reason was the faithful praying of one man who never attended the meetings but gave himself to prayer. In 1872 the American evangelist Dwight L. Moody began a campaign in London, England, which was used of God to touch countless lives. Later Moody discovered that a humble bedridden girl had been praying. The list could go on and on.

Are you praying for revival, both in your own life and in the lives of others? Are you confessing sin to Him and seeking His blessing on your life?

* * *

REVIVALS

2077 -- MOODY BECAME A MENACE TO SOME

A person can be a Christian for many years yet remain spiritually immature. Therefore it's possible for a new believer to be far more grown up in the Lord than someone who has been saved for 40 years.

A good example of this is found in an incident described by Ethel Barrett in her book "It Only Hurts When I Laugh". She said that when D. L. Moody became a Christian, he developed such a hunger for God's Word, spent so much time reading it, and was so quick to obey it that he became a "menace" to some believers. His rapid spiritual growth was an embarrassment to certain people who, though they had been saved for years, never grew up in Christ. Week after week in the church Moody attended, he would share a new experience he had with the Lord. Finally, some of the older saints who just couldn't stand feeling humiliated by his exemplary life, went to Moody's uncle and urged him to quiet down his nephew.

Ethel Barrett drew this conclusion about Moody: "His robust spiritual health and bounding energy disturbed their napping; he was just too much. So, while they were sucking their thumbs, he was growing until he left them far behind; he grew more in a few years than they did in thirty."

* * *

REVIVALS

2078 -- PRAYER FOR REVIVAL IN A SONG

John Newton, who lived in a dark day, in common with faithful ministers and their people, was praying for the reappearance of revival. He wrote to a friend:

"A revival is wanted here with us as it is with you, and some of us are praying and also singing for a revival. The song we are singing will be found on the reverse side of my letter."

This was their revival song:

Saviour, visit Thy plantation,
Send, oh send, a gracious rain;
All will come to desolation
Unless Thou dost bless again.

Break the tempter's fatal power,
Turn the stony hearts to flesh,
And begin this very hour
To revive Thy work afresh.

Once, O Lord, Thy garden flourished;
Every part looked gay and green;
Then Thy Word our spirits nourished:
Happy seasons we have seen.

But a drought has since succeeded,
And a sad decline we see:
Lord, Thy help is greatly needed:
Help can only come from Thee.

Let our mutual love be fervent:
Make us prevalent in prayer;
Let each one esteemed Thy servant
Shun the world's bewitching snare.

-- Sunday School Times

* * *

REVIVALS

2079 -- REVIVAL -- IF?

If all the sleeping folk will wake up,
If all the lukewarm folk will fire up,
If all the dishonest folk will confess up,
If all the disgruntled folk will cheer up,
If all the depressed folk will cheer up,
If all the estranged folk will make up,
If all the gossipers will shut up,
If all true soldiers will stand up,
If all the dry bones will shake up,
If all the church members will pray up...
Then we can have a revival!

-- R. G. Lee

* * *

REVIVALS

2080 -- REVIVALS FROM ONE, SMALL SOURCE

A little plant was given to a sick girl. In trying to take care of it, the family began a revolution. First, they cleaned the window that more light might come in to the leaves of the plant. Then, when not too cold, they opened the window, that fresh air might help the plant to grow; and this did the family good as well as the plant. Next, the clean window made the rest of the room look so untidy that they washed the floor and cleaned the walls and arranged the furniture more neatly. This inspired the father of the family to mend some broken furniture, which he got so much engaged over that it kept him at home several evenings, instead of spending the time at the tavern; and the money thus saved went to buy comforts for them all. So the home grew pleasant till it was the brightest place in the world to all the family. The one little flower filled the whole house with bloom. -- Newton

* * *

REVIVALS

2081 -- THE DIVIDING LINE OBLITERATED

I remember when as a young Christian worker I held an evangelistic campaign in a church at a crossroads, way out on the prairie. It was just a little church. There was a center aisle, and the seats went over against the wall from that aisle. We had very good congregations, but nothing else. After several nights of trying to preach, and giving an invitation, the pastor said to me: "Years ago a family in this church quarreled, and the community has taken sides in the matter. The members of the family do not speak to each other and that aisle down the center of the church divides the factions. The people on the one side will not speak to those on the other."

One night I don't know what happened but when the meeting ended, the women who had a grievance against each other met in front of the pulpit, asking each other for forgiveness. Then the thing broke loose. There were just two nights left. The night we closed the campaign, the pastor stood with me on the doorstep of that little church. He said, "Look out there over the prairie," and all who have been on the prairies of Nebraska know that you can see for miles, "I don't believe there is a single unsaved man left in any farmhouse in sight." God gathered them all during the last two or three nights, when the Christians got right with each other and with God. -- Will M. Houghton

* * *

REVIVALS

2082 -- THE GREAT REVIVAL

On a November day in 1802, at a sacramental celebration at the church at Upper Buffalo Washington County Pennsylvania, John McMillan turned to Elisha McCurdy and asked him to preach a sermon while the Communion was being administered to a part of the great multitude. McCurdy ascended the wagon pulpit with fear and trembling, not knowing what he should say. After a hymn and a prayer, he opened the Bible at random and his eye fell on the Second Psalm: "Why do the heathen rage?" The Whisky Rebellion and the terms of amnesty offered by the government were still fresh in the memory of the congregation.

McCurdy startled his hearers by announcing that he would preach a sermon on politics. He said he had just received a letter from the government informing him that an insurrection had taken place, and that measures had been taken to suppress the rebellion and amnesty had been proclaimed to all who would return to their duty. Since many of the rebels were present in his congregation, he said he would read them the proclamation of the government.

He then read the Second Psalm as describing the condition of sinners and announcing the terms of amnesty offered them in Christ (v 12): "Kiss the Son lest he be angry."

During the sermon which followed, many fell to the ground crying out in their anguish that they had been rebels against God. The scene was like the close of a battle in which every tenth man had been wounded. This sermon on the Second Psalm, famous as McCurdy's War Sermon, played a mighty part in the Great Revival which swept the country in the first decade of the nineteenth century. -- McCartney

* * *

REVIVALS -- SOUGHT

2083 -- AWAKENING THROUGH PRAYER

An acquaintance told me that in one community the Christians had got so dead, so destitute of the power of the Holy Spirit, the minister himself so backslidden, that they had no prayer meeting. A mother in Israel came to the minister one day, and said to him, "Can not we have a prayer meeting?" "Do you think anybody wants a prayer meeting?" he said. "Well, if you think anybody wants one, I will bring it up at the next church meeting" (they had the church meetings once in three months, and the next one would be in about six weeks,) "and we will have a committee appointed to report at the next meeting.

Alas, that ministers can get so backslidden and cold that they can not hold a prayer meeting! But such was the case. That was the best she could do. A few days after she came again to the pastor, and said, "Can not we have a prayer meeting?" And he said, " Well, if you are so anxious, write a notice and I will read it, and we will have one appointed at your house." She brought the notice, and Sunday he read it very hastily, and carelessly announcing a hymn with the same breath. So indifferent and cold in his heart; but they did get the notice.

There was a lawyer's wife in that meeting (her husband was unconverted), who said to her husband on Tuesday night, "Will you stay with the children a little while? I want to go out." She went to the prayer meeting, read, prayed, talked -- nobody there but herself and the aged sister who called the meeting. The old gospel, "two agreed." By and by she looked at the clock. "Why!" she said, "I had no idea it was so late. My husband will be weary." She hastened home.

As she hurried in at the door her husband was reading the Bible; but he was ashamed of it and put it behind him as soon as he could; and she said, "I am sorry I stayed so late." "Where have you been?" "I have been to prayer meeting," "Prayer meeting! I did not know you had any in town; where was it?" "Down at mother ___'s." "What did you pray for?" "We prayed for you, my dear." (bursting into tears.)

Then the Bible came back. "Well, my dear wife," he says, "That accounts for it. I never had such feelings on the subject of religion, as I have had in the last hour. I took down this Bible, and read it. I did not know why I did it, hardly."

You may be sure religion came to that house, and there began a revival of religion that night, which this brother told me, swept clear through the adjoining country, and down through the Pennsylvania line. That I believe, illustrates the whole history of God's Church. Sometimes it gets down very low, but the Holy Spirit is somewhere, in the heart of some old father or mother, or some young man.

* * *

REVIVALS -- SOUGHT

2084 -- MUSCATINE, IOWA REVIVAL

You have read about the great revival in Muscatine. Five persons, a year ago the seventh day of last January, met in a law office and pledged themselves (joining hands on their knee) that they would have a daily prayer meeting until God came to that city. They had not been visited with a great revival for twenty years, and they prayed and prayed there every day. Sometimes there was five, and sometimes not the five. and sometimes a few more. During the last Autumn two brethren visited me, and God laid their case on my heart. I was just getting on the cars when I met them. At first I thought that i could not do any thing for them But all the way to Chicago my heart was moved. I went right to the hotel and wrote a letter saying; "Some how I feel so impressed for Muscatine that if your whole people, ministers and all, wish it, and will let me know by such a time, I will arrange to come there, and lay all other work aside.: Such was the beginning of that work of grace, and I believe God was in it. -- Albert P. Graves

* * *

REVIVALS -- SOUGHT

2085 -- PRAYING MEMBERS

Mr. Moody tells us a remarkable incident in connection with an early visit to London. He had gone there for a visit. He was unknown in London; hence he did not expect to preach; but a little while after arriving there he was invited to preach for a certain church, which he did. He said it was a very cold and uninteresting service to him, but he announced that he would preach again that night. Upon reaching the church, he noticed that the atmosphere had changed, he did not know just why. At the close of the meeting, he was led to give an invitation for those who wanted to be saved to stand. A great crowd of people stood. He left the next day for Dublin Ireland. Shortly after arriving there, he received a telegram from the church to return, stating that the whole community was in an upstir and clamor for a series of meetings. He went back, and found that a great revival was beginning and hundreds of people were being converted.

Not long after, he learned the secret. An invalid lady, who could not attend the church, was praying for a mighty outpouring of the Spirit upon the church. She prayed for months. Once she saw in the papers accounts of some of the Moody meetings in America, and although she had never heard of Mr. Moody before, she began to pray that God would send him to her church in London for a revival. One Sunday morning, her sister upon her return from the service informed her of Moody's presence and his preaching, whereupon she spent the whole afternoon in prayer that God would make that night a night of power. That explains the difference between morning and evening services! Oh, I tell you what we want in the churches is praying members! Would that we could find even one who would thus resolve to pray to God for salvation and power to come upon the church. This is the need of today -- importunate prayer like the SyroPhoenician woman's "Lord, help! Lord help!" -- L. G. Broughton

* * *

REVIVALS -- SOUGHT

2086 -- REVIVAL IS THE NEED, NOT A MUSEUM

In Nottingham, England, is the Wesleyan Chapel where William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, was converted. A memorial tablet marks the spot where this notable friend of the friendless received his baptism of spiritual power. Salvation Army leaders from around the world journey to that chapel as a shrine. One day an aged colored man in the uniform of the Army was found by the minister of the chapel standing with uplifted eyes before the tablet. "Can a man say his prayers here?" the old soldier asked. "Of course," was the reply. "Of course, a man can say his prayers here." And the old Army officer went down on his knees, and lifting his hands before the tablet, prayed, "O God; do it again. Do it again!" -- The Evangel

* * *

REWARDS -- FOR SERVICE

2087 -- BENNY LOCKE'S RAILROAD RUN

Bennie Locke, an engine driver who has done fifty-seven years of service on the Lakawanna Railroad, and has never received a demerit mark from his superior officers, had the

habit, during the greater part of his service, of removing his cap on entering his engine and uttering a prayer for God's protection on each day's run. One experience he thus describes:

"Number Six was twenty-five minutes late out of Scranton one day, and I had my little prayer as usual when I stepped into the cab. After I had asked for the safety of our train, I said, 'Lord, help me to bring her in on time.'

It was a stiff climb up the Pocono Mountains for the first part of the trip, and it never seems so steep as when you are late. I couldn't gain a second on the way up but after we dipped over the summit, things began to break just right for me. It was a beautiful day, with air perfectly clear, and we almost flew down the mountain. I just held her steady and let her go. At last the old train shed at Hoboken loomed ahead, and, as we pulled into the station I looked at my watch and we were just on the dot.

As I stood wiping the sweat from my face there was a tap of a cane on the outside of my cab and on looking out I saw the president of the road, all smiles, and he said to me, 'A good run sir! 'A very good run!'

That meant more to me than anything that could have happened in this world. And, brother, when I make my last run, and pull into the Great Terminal, if I can just hear Him say, 'A good run, sir! 'A very good run!' the toil and the struggle down here won't matter." -- Sunday School Times

* * *

REWARDS -- FOR SERVICE

2088 -- DELAYED RETURNS

A newspaper article reminded me of the kind of "delayed returns" we should be living for. It told of a car dealer who went out of his way to give a foreign student an honest deal on a new automobile. Fifteen years later, the young man had become the sole purchasing agent for the Iranian Contractors Association. He showed his gratitude for the kindness he had received by placing a multimillion-dollar order with that dealer for 750 heavy dump trucks and 350 pickups. "It's unbelievable!" exclaimed the businessman. The good he had done was rewarded years later beyond his wildest imagination.

Just as that salesman's reward came later so too God will commend us in Glory. If we do good to others for the immediate thanks we receive, we already have our reward. But if we do it for God, the future return will be as sure and generous as He is.

* * *

REWARDS -- FOR SERVICE

2089 -- PAYDAY SOMEDAY

An Atheist farmer often ridiculed people who believed in God. He wrote the following letter to the editor of a local newspaper: "I plowed on Sunday, planted on Sunday, cultivated on Sunday, and hauled in my crops on Sunday; but I never went to church on Sunday. Yet I harvested more bushels per acre than anyone else, even those who are God-fearing and never miss a service." The editor printed the man's letter and then added this remark: "God doesn't always settle His accounts in October." That editor was right!

Sometimes even dedicated Christians are tempted to complain because of what they see in the world around them. Perplexed by the success and prosperity of the wicked, oftentimes at the expense of the righteous, they ask, why doesn't the Lord do something about it? Why doesn't He reward those who fear Him, and judge those who disregard Him? Be patient. He will! True, He doesn't always "settle His accounts in October," but He does settle His accounts!

So if you're trying to do the will of God and you become discouraged because unjust people are getting ahead, don't be shortsighted. Remember what the psalmist David advised: "Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither like the green herb." He went on to say, "For evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait upon the Lord shall inherit the earth." (Ps. 37:1,2,9)

* * *

REWARDS -- FOR SERVICE

2090 -- YOU'RE NOT HOME YET

An old missionary couple had been working in Africa for years and were returning to New York to retire. They had no pension; their health was broken; they were defeated, discouraged, and afraid. They discovered they were booked on the same ship as President Teddy Roosevelt, who was returning from one of his big-game hunting expeditions.

No one paid any attention to them. They watched the fanfare that accompanied the President's entourage, with passengers trying to catch a glimpse of the great man.

As the ship moved across the ocean, the old missionary said to his wife, "Something is wrong. Why should we have given our lives in faithful service for God in Africa all these many years and have no one care a thing about us? Here this man comes back from a hunting trip and everybody makes much over him, but nobody gives two hoots about us."

"Dear, you shouldn't feel that way," his wife said.

"I can't help it; it doesn't seem right."

When the ship docked in New York, a band was waiting to greet the President. The mayor and other dignitaries were there. The papers were full of the President's arrival, but no one

noticed this missionary couple. They slipped off the ship and found a cheap flat on the East Side, hoping the next day to see what they could do to make a living in the city.

That night the man's spirit broke. He said to his wife, "I can't take this; God is not treating us fairly."

His wife replied, "Why don't you go in the bedroom and tell that to the Lord?"

A short time later he came out from the bedroom, but now his face was completely different. His wife asked, "Dear, what happened?"

"The Lord settled it with me," he said. "I told him how bitter I was that the President should receive this tremendous homecoming, when no one met us as we returned home. And when I finished, it seemed as though the Lord put his hand on my shoulder and simply said, 'But you're not home yet!'"

Yes, there are rewards for faithfulness, but not necessarily down here. -- Ray Stedman

* * *

RICHES

2091 -- A CHECK THAT WILL BOUNCE AT THE JUDGMENT!

Aunt "Emma" was married to a tightwad who was also a little strange. He made a good salary, but they lived frugally because he insisted on putting 20 percent of his paycheck under the mattress. (The man didn't trust banks.) The money, he said, was going to come in handy in their old age.

When "Uncle Ollie" was 60, he was stricken with cancer. Toward the end, he made Aunt Em promise, in the presence of his brothers, that she would put the money he had stashed away in his coffin so he could buy his way into heaven if he had to.

They all knew he was a little odd, but this was clearly a crazy request. Aunt Em did promise, however, and assured Uncle Ollie's brothers that she was a woman of her word and would do as he asked.

The following morning she took the money (about \$26,000) to the bank and deposited it. She then wrote a check and put it in the casket four days later.

This is a true story and our family has laughed about it ever since.

* * *

RICHES

2092 -- LAUGHING MILLIONAIRES ARE RARE

"Millionaires who laugh," said Andrew Carnegie, "are rare." Sir Ernest Cassel, who spent vast fortunes for the benefit of mankind, a multi-millionaire, the friend of kings and emperors, said to one of his visitors: "You may have all the money in the world, and yet be a lonely, sorrowing man. The light has gone out of my life. I live in this beautiful house, which I have furnished with all the luxury and wonder of art; but, believe me, I no longer value my millions. I sit here for hours every night longing for my beloved daughter."

* * *

RICHERS

2093 -- MONEY MANAGEMENT

For the Christian, the source of goals and objectives in financial planning is the Bible. In his tape series "Mastery of Materialism," John MacArthur, pastor of Grace Community Church in Panorama City, California, said that "sixteen out of thirty-eight of Christ's parables deal with money; more is said in the New Testament about money than Heaven and hell combined; five times more is said about money than prayer; and where there are five hundred-plus verses on both prayer and faith, there are over two thousand verses dealing with money and possessions." Obviously, the Bible has much to say about money management.

* * *

RICHERS

2094 -- MONKEYS TRAPPED BY THEIR GREED

A jungle tribe learned to trap monkeys by their own greed. Tribesman simply left bright colored beads in glass jars where the monkeys could spot them.

Curiosity and a desire for the beads led the monkeys to reach inside the small opening to grasp them. But the jar's neck was too small for them to withdraw their hands with their newly found wealth. And the jar was too large to allow them to escape with it. The monkeys face an agonizing choice: forfeit the trinkets and escape, or clasp and be captured. They usually chose capture.

They acquired their treasure, but only for a moment. Ultimately they lost their freedom and their lives. When it comes to wealth, men can be as foolish.

* * *

RICHERS

2095 -- OLD TESTAMENT MONETARY MEASURES

Though the precise weight (and therefore value) of Old Testament monetary measure is unknown, the talent was approximately 100 lbs., the shekel was about .533 oz., and the pound about 1.6 lbs. Using these numbers and a gold price of \$600/oz., the total value of the gold mentioned in 1 Kings 10:14, 16, 17 in the temple was \$681 million.

* * *

RICHES

2096 -- PLUNGE INTO SILENCE

A husband and wife were attending a county fair where, for five dollars per person, a man was giving rides on an old biplane. The couple wanted to go up but they thought the price was too steep. Consequently, they tried to negotiate a lower price. "We'll pay you five dollars for both of us," they said to the pilot. "After all, we'll both have to squeeze into that tiny cockpit that was built for only one person." The pilot refused to lower his price, but he made a counter-offer. He said to the couple, "Pay me the full price of ten dollars and I'll take you up. And if you don't say one word during the flight, I'll give you all your money back." The couple agreed and got into the plane. Up they went and the pilot proceeded to perform every trick he knew, looping and whirling and flying upside down and lots more. Finally, when the plane had landed, the pilot said to the husband, "Congratulations! Here's your ten dollars; you didn't say a single word." To which the man replied, "Nope, but I almost did when my wife fell out."

The Apostle Paul has written that the desire for money can plunge us "into ruin and destruction" (1 Tim. 6:9). He might have said also that the thought of parting with some of our money can plunge us into absolute silence.

* * *

RICHES

2097 -- SOME THINGS MONEY WON'T BUY

Money will buy a bed; but not sleep; books but not brains; food but not appetite; finery but not beauty; a house but not a home; medicine but not health; luxuries but not culture; amusements but not happiness; religion but not salvation; a passport to everywhere but heaven. -- The Voice in the Wilderness

* * *

RICHES

2098 -- THAT MAN'S RELIGION IS VAIN

"If a man's religion does not affect his use of money, that man's religion is vain." -- Hugh Martin

* * *

RICHES

2099 -- WHAT MONEY CAN'T BUY

Money can buy a bed but not sleep, a hammer but not a carpenter, "things" but not friends, a toy but not a child's happiness, a pen and paper but not an author, a pencil but not an idea, a house but not a home, an agreement but not peace, paints but not an artist, eyeglasses but not eyesight, a chair but not rest, a computer but not wisdom, a school but not students, death but not life, a flag but not patriotism, a gun but not a soldier, a book but not knowledge, a machine but not a skill, a desk but not a teacher, a name but not a man, a church but not a religion,, an altar but not salvation, and a cross but not a savior. -- Ellen Meisberger

* * *

RICHES

2100 -- WHEN HE WAS HAPPY

No matter how long a person may live or how rich he may be, money cannot bring him happiness. In his book "For Better or For Worse," Walter Maier included this story: "A rich man had committed suicide. In his pockets were found two items: \$30,000 in cash and a letter. The letter read in part: 'I have discovered during my life that piles of money do not bring happiness. I am taking my life because I can no longer stand the solitude and boredom. When I was an ordinary workman in New York, I was happy. Now that I possess millions, I am infinitely sad and prefer death.'"

* * *

RICHES -- DECEPTIVE

2101 -- HAPPINESS IS NOT BASED ON MONEY

Christina Onassis said, "Happiness is not based on money and the greatest proof of that is our family."

* * *

RICHES -- DECEPTIVE

2102 -- THAT SAME AFTERNOON HE DIED

Dennis Barnhart was president of an aggressive, rapidly growing company, Eagle Computer Incorporated. His life is a study in tragedy. From a small beginning, his firm grew incredibly fast. He finally decided they should go public. The forty-four-year-old man, as a result of this first public stock offering, became a multimillionaire virtually overnight. Then, for some strange reason, while he was in his red Ferrari only blocks from the company headquarters, he drove his car through twenty feet of guard rail into a ravine and died.

A Los Angeles Times account read:

Until the accident at 4:30 Wednesday afternoon, it had been the best days for Barnhart and the thriving young company, which makes small business and personal computers. Eagle netted \$37 million from the initial offering of 2.75 million shares. The stock which hit the market at \$13 a share quickly rose as high as \$27 before closing at a bid price of \$15.50.

After describing the stock, the article added: "That made Barnharts ownership of 592,000 shares worth more than \$9 million." And that same afternoon he died in an auto accident.

* * *

RICHES -- DECEPTIVE

2103 -- WHAT BECAME OF THEM

In 1923, nine of the world's most successful financiers met at Chicago's Edgewater Beach Hotel. Financially, they literally "held the world by the tail" -- anything that money could buy was within their grasp -- they were rich -- rich -- rich! Read their names and the high position each held:

1. Charles Schwab, the president of the largest steel company.
2. Samuel Insull, the president of the largest electric utility company.
3. Howard Hopson, the president of the largest gas company.
4. Arthur Cutten, the great wheat speculator.
5. Richard Whitney, the president of the New York Stock Exchange.
6. Albert Fall, the Secretary of Interior in President Harding's Cabinet.
7. Jesse Livermore, the greatest "bear" on Wall Street.
8. Ivar Kreuger, head of the world's greatest monopoly.
9. Leon Fraser, president of the Bank of International Settlements.

A tremendously impressive group -- right? Would you like to change positions with one of them? Before you decide, let's look at the picture 25 years later -- in 1948:

1. Charles Schwab was forced into bankruptcy and lived the last five years before his death on borrowed money.
2. Samuel Insull not only died in a foreign land, a fugitive from justice, but was penniless.
3. Howard Hopson was insane.
4. Arthur Cutten became insolvent and had died abroad.
5. Richard Whitney had just been released from Sing Sing prison.
6. Albert Fall had been pardoned from prison so he could die at home -- broke.
7. Jesse Livermore had died a suicide.
8. Ivar Kreuger took his own life.
9. Leon Fraser also committed suicide.

Now, are you still impressed with this group? A vast amount of talent and potential went down the drain with these men. What happened? Their lives were out of balance!

* * *

RICHES -- DECEPTIVE

2104 -- WHEN THERE IS SILVER ON THE GLASS

We often put our affection on stuff that has a price tag. I read recently about an old, rich man with a cranky, miserable attitude who visited a Rabbi. The Rabbi was a simple man whose heart was right and he lived a simple life. They weren't together very long before the Rabbi got a wonderful idea on how to illustrate to the man what was wrong. He took him by the hand and he led him over to his window and he said, "Now look out the window and tell me what you see."

The man stood there and said, "Well I see some men and some women and I see a few children."

The Rabbi took him by the hand and led him across the room to a mirror and said, "Now look there and tell me what you see."

The man frowned and said, "Well obviously I see myself."

"Interesting", the Rabbi replied. "In the window there is glass, in the mirror there is glass. But the glass of the mirror is covered with a little bit of silver. And no sooner is the silver added than you cease to see others, and only yourself." Maybe our troubles started when just a little bit of silver was added and we stopped looking through and starting looking at.

* * *

RICHES -- DISAPPOINTING

2105 -- A ROTTEN IDEA

Buried Life Savings Just A Rotten Idea -- that headline drew my attention to an Associated Press article in our local newspaper. It told about a man in Beijing, China, who, at 82 years of age, suffered a devastating financial loss. Mistrustful of banks, he had dug a hole in the ground five years earlier and deposited his life savings in it. When the man needed some cash, he dug up the money. To his dismay, he discovered that it was moldy almost beyond recognition. He was able to salvage only about one-third of his savings.

Our Lord said, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven" (Matt. 6:19, 20). Investing in the lives of others and growing in our relationship with God are spiritual treasures. They are not subject to destruction or thievery. They are fully protected. Their value never diminishes.

* * *

RICHES -- DISAPPOINTING

2106 -- HE DID NOT BECOME PRESIDENT

In the June 14, 1968 issue of "Life" magazine appeared a picture of David Kennedy sitting by a pond outside the White House. The picture had been taken by Aunt Jacqueline and was inscribed by his uncle with the words, "A future president inspects his property -- John Kennedy." Though he had name, status, wealth, and all that money could buy he was found dead by his own hand at age 28. Money can buy the things of this world but cannot satisfy man's inner longing for peace.

* * *

RICHES -- DISAPPOINTING

2107 -- IT HAD ALL COME TOO EASILY

Do money and social position really satisfy? Just read the tragic account of Christina Onassis who died last November at age 37. Commenting on her life, her stepsister Henrietta Gelber said, "She was one of those people who would never be happy." "She would become

impatient. It had all come too easily -- all the money, houses all over the world, few real responsibilities." "She lacked a sense of achievement," says Gelber. "What she was striving for was virtually impossible in her situation. She had houses all over the world, but she never really had a home." -- People Magazine

* * *

RICHES -- EARTHLY

2108 -- A FULFILLMENT OF ECCLESIASTES 6:2

Ecclesiastes 6:2 "A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth not for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this is vanity, and it is an evil disease."

In his book, "The Rockefeller Billions," Jules Abels says that John D. Rockefeller had an income of approximately a million dollars a week toward the end of his life. Yet his doctors allowed him to eat only a bare minimum. One of his biographers said he lived on a diet a pauper would have hated. "Now, less than 100 pounds in weight, he sampled everything (at breakfast): a drop of coffee, a spoonful of cereal, a fork full of egg, and a bit of chop the size of a pea." Rockefeller was the richest man in the world, but he didn't have the ability to enjoy even his food.

* * *

RICHES -- EARTHLY

2109 -- ETERNAL RICHES ARE NOT INHERITED THUS

Columnist L. M. Boyd recently described the amazing good fortune of a man named Jack Wurm. In 1949, Mr. Wurm was broke and out of a job. One day he was walking along a San Francisco beach when he came across a bottle with a piece of paper in it. As he read the note, he discovered that it was the last will and testament of Daisy Singer Alexander, heir to the Singer sewing machine fortune. The note read, "To avoid confusion, I leave my entire estate to the lucky person who finds this bottle and to my attorney, Barry Cohen, share and share alike." According to Boyd, the courts accepted the theory that the heiress had written the note 12 years earlier, and had thrown the bottle into the Thames River in London, from where it had drifted across the oceans to the feet of a penniless and jobless Jack Wurm. His chance discovery netted him over 6 million dollars in cash and Singer stock. How would you like to have been making Mr. Wurm's footprints on that San Francisco beach? What a find! And yet 6 million dollars doesn't even begin to compare with our spiritual inheritance! (Christ to not will His eternal riches through such whims and chance! They only inherit His wealth who meet His conditions and who thereby become the sons and daughters of God. -- Duane V. Maxey)

* * *

RICHES -- EARTHLY

2110 -- ORANGES VALUED MORE THAN DIAMONDS

There's a true story that comes from the sinking of the Titanic. A frightened woman found her place in a lifeboat that was about to be lowered into the raging North Atlantic. She suddenly thought of something she needed, so she asked permission to return to her stateroom before they cast off. She was granted three minutes or they would have to leave without her.

She ran across the deck that was already slanted at a dangerous angle. She raced through the gambling room with all the money that had rolled to one side, ankle deep. She came to her stateroom and quickly pushed aside her diamond rings and expensive bracelets and necklaces as she reached to the shelf above her bed and grabbed three small oranges. She quickly found her way back to the lifeboat and got in.

Now that seems incredible because thirty minutes earlier she would not have chosen a crate of oranges over even the smallest diamond. But death had boarded the Titanic. One blast of its awful breath had transformed all values. Instantaneously, priceless things had become worthless. Worthless things had become priceless. And in that moment she preferred three small oranges to a crate of diamonds.

* * *

RICHES -- EARTHLY

2111 -- THE SAD LIFE OF HOWARD HUGHES

He was the world's ultimate mystery -- so secretive, so reclusive, so enigmatic, that for more than 15 years no one could say for certain that he was alive, much less how he looked or behaved.

Howard Hughes was one of the richest men in the world, with the destinies of thousands of people -- perhaps even of governments -- at his disposal, yet he lived a sunless, joyless, half-lunatic life. In his later years he fled from one resort hotel to another -- Las Vegas, Nicaragua, Acapulco -- and his physical appearance became odder and odder. His straggly beard hung down to his waist and his hair reached to the middle of his back. His fingernails were two inches long, and his toenails hadn't been trimmed for so long they resembled corkscrews.

Hughes was married for 13 years to Jean Peters, one of the most beautiful women in the world. But never in that time were the two seen in public together, and there is no record of their ever having been photographed together. For a while they occupied separate bungalows at the Beverly Hills Hotel (at \$175 per day each), and later she lived in an opulent and carefully guarded French Regency house atop a hill in Bel Air, making secretive and increasingly infrequent trips to be with Hughes in Las Vegas. They were divorced in 1970.

Hughes often said, "Every man has his price or a guy like me couldn't exist," yet no amount of money bought the affection of his associates. Most of his employees who have broken the silence report their disgust for him. -- Alan McGinnis

* * *

RICHES -- FLEETING AND UNCERTAIN

2112 -- BANKRUPT THEORIES

Albert J. Lowry set out to prove that it was easy to get rich quick in real estate with no money down -- and he did just that. Not surprisingly, his 1980 book, *How You Can Become Financially Independent by Investing in Real Estate* was a bestseller. In a May 1981 cover story, *Money* magazine estimated Lowry's net worth at \$30 million and called him a "real estate wizard." But something went wrong, and in October 1985 the Success Development Institute, which promoted Lowry's theories, collapsed with \$2.5 million in debts. In June of 1987 it was reported that Lowry's assets were being liquidated in Los Angeles under Chapter 7 of the federal bankruptcy code.

* * *

RICHES -- FLEETING AND UNCERTAIN

2113 -- CAN'T AFFORD TO SAVE MONEY

A salesman was trying to sell a refrigerator to a housewife and said, "Lady, you can save enough on your food bill to pay for it." The housewife answered, "We're paying for a car on the carfare we save, we're paying for a washing machine on the laundry bill we save, we're paying for a television set on the cost of movies we don't see anymore. It looks as if we can't afford to save any money at this time."

* * *

RICHES -- FLEETING AND UNCERTAIN

2114 -- GOD GRANTED THAT DESIRE

When we desire the right things, God gives us the desires of our heart. Dr. Wilfred Grenfell (1866-1940) became the personal physician for Edward VII. Before him was a life of prosperity and luxury. But the benefits of this career held little appeal for him. He found his deepest satisfaction in his personal relationship with God. As he reflected on his place in God's service, he developed a deep desire to practice medicine in Labrador. God granted that desire.

Looking back, he thought of all he would have missed had he stayed in London. Riding in a Rolls Royce and living in a mansion would have been paltry substitutes for the 42 years of medical missionary work he did in Labrador.

* * *

RICHES -- FLEETING AND UNCERTAIN

2115 -- THE STOCK MARKET

A leading economic expert, Professor Irving Fisher of Yale, had this to say about the bright future of the stock market and the American economy: "Stock prices have reached what looks like a permanently high plateau." (Spoken in early October 1929 just a couple of weeks before the stock market crash that caused the Great Depression.) -- Perils of Prosperity

* * *

RICHES -- FLEETING AND UNCERTAIN

2116 -- WHO NEEDS THIS?

Think of the man who strives and labors and tries extra hard to satisfy his family with an enormous, beautiful mansion -- and his wife doesn't even want to live there. So he winds up with a big pile of wood and stone, cabinets and carpet, elegant rooms lavishly furnished, but his wife won't even live there.

Such was the case of Glen Erie in Colorado Springs, Colorado, headquarters of The Navigators. That beautiful English-style mansion was built by a man who had hoped to please his wife. But after being there only a few days, she sighed, "Who needs this?" (What was she going to do with thirty-five rooms anyway?) It was eventually sold to The Navigators. They bought it and filled it! The irony of it all is that those who are right with God ultimately derive benefit from everyone's labor.

* * *

RICHES -- PERILS OF

2117 -- A GOOD SERVANT, A POOR MASTER

Money is a good servant but a poor master. The lure for gold is stronger than the human will, and with many a man it stands between his soul and his God. Someday it will be discovered that the bars that shut many out of the kingdom of heaven are forged of silver and gold.

* * *

RICHES -- PERILS OF

2118 -- A VERY SMALL CAMEL, A VERY LARGE NEEDLE

A wealthy television evangelist was dying in his mansion, and his flock gathered round to ask him for his last wish. "Before I die," he said, "I would like to take a ride." And they asked the rich pastor what he required for that final ride before entering the kingdom of heaven. And he said, "I would like a very small camel and a very large needle."

* * *

RICHES -- PERILS OF

2119 -- AUGMENTING MEANS, OR DIMINISHING WANTS

A major cause of arguments in the home is the worry about money. Ben Franklin said that there are two ways of solving money problems: augmenting your means -- that is, making more money -- or diminishing your wants; either will do. But the best plan of all is to do both at the same time: earn more money and diminish your wants. In this way, you'll live well within your means and always have a surplus of money.

* * *

RICHES -- PERILS OF

2120 -- NO RICHES IN HEAVEN

Dr. George W. Truett was entertained on one occasion in the home of a wealthy oil man in Texas. After the dinner the man took him up to the roof of his house and indicated huge fields of oil derricks, and said, Dr. Truett, that's all mine. I came to this country twenty- five years ago penniless, and now I own everything as far as you can see in that direction." Then he turned to the opposite direction and indicated waving fields of grain and said again, It's all mine. I own everything as far as you can see in that direction." Then he turned to the east, and pointed to huge herds of cattle and said again, "It's all mine, everything as far as you can see in that direction is mine." One final time he turned toward the west and pointed to a great virgin forest, and said again, It's all mine. Twenty-five years ago I was penniless, but I worked hard and saved, and today I own every thing as far as you can see in this direction, that direction, that direction, and this direction."

He paused for the expected praise, but to his astonishment it didn't come. Dr. Truett laid a hand lovingly on his shoulder, pointed upward and said, "My friend, how much do you own in that direction?" The man dropped his head in shame and said, I never thought of that." -- Western Recorder

* * *

RICHES -- SPIRITUAL

2121 -- A GEM OF AN IDEA

A parable told by William Cunningham, advisor to Gov. George Deukmejian of California:

A man was out walking in the desert when a voice said to him, "Pick up some pebbles and put them in your pocket, and tomorrow you will be both sorry and glad."

The man obeyed. He stooped down and picked up a handful of pebbles and put them in his pocket. The next morning he reached into his pocket and found diamonds and rubies and emeralds. And he was both glad and sorry. Glad that he had taken some -- sorry that he hadn't taken more.

And so it is with God's word.

* * *

RICHES -- SPIRITUAL

2122 -- AN INTERESTING STORY -- A POOR APPLICATION

During the Depression, Charles Darrow could find no work. Although he was broke and his wife was expecting a baby, he wasn't discouraged. Every evening they played a game which he had devised. Remembering happy vacations in nearby Atlantic City, he laid out his own little boardwalk on a square piece of cardboard and pretended to be rich. On his "properties" he put miniature houses and hotels he had carved out of small pieces of wood. The game, called "Monopoly," was later marketed by Parker Brothers and ultimately made Darrow a millionaire.

This reminds me of many Christians who own very few material possessions and yet have wealth that is truly satisfying. Through faith they have present "spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. 1:3), and they live in anticipation of fully enjoying these riches in Heaven. (This strikes me as an interesting story, but a poor application. -- Duane V. Maxey)

* * *

RICHES -- SPIRITUAL

2123 -- EMPTIED TO BE FILLED

One by one He took them from me
All the things I valued most;
'Til I was empty-handed,
Every glittering toy was lost.

And I walked earth's highways, grieving,
In my rags and poverty.
Until I heard His voice inviting,
"Lift those empty hands to Me!"

Then I turned my hands toward heaven,

And He filled them with a store
Of His own transcendent riches,
'Til they could contain no more.

And at last I comprehended
With my stupid mind, and dull,
That God cannot pour His riches
Into hands already full.

-- Source Unknown

* * *

RICHES -- SPIRITUAL

2124 -- MORE WEALTHY THAN THE RICH MAN

A nobleman in the north of England once said to a gentleman who accompanied him in a walk: "These beautiful grounds, as far as your eye can reach; those majestic woods on the brow of the distant hills, and those extensive and valuable mines, belong to me. Yonder powerful steam engine obtains the produce of my mines, and those ships convey my wealth to other parts of the kingdom.

"Well," replied the gentleman, "do you see yonder little hovel, that seems but a speck in your estate? There dwells a poor woman who can say more than all this, for she can say, "Christ is mine!" -- Topical Illustrations

* * *

RICHES -- SPIRITUAL

2125 -- STORED IN ONE OF HIS OWN WAREHOUSES

William Randolph Hearst once read of an extremely valuable piece of art, which he decided he must add to his extensive collection. He instructed his agent to scour the galleries of the world to find the masterpiece he was determined to have at any price. After many months of painstaking search, the agent reported that the piece already belonged to Mr. Hearst and had been stored in one of his warehouses for many years.

It is tragic that many believers become entangled in a quest for something more in the Christian life, for something special, something extra that the "ordinary" Christian life does not possess. They talk of getting more of Jesus Christ, more of the Holy Spirit, more power, more blessings, a higher life, a deeper life -- as if the resources of God were divinely doled out one at a time like so many pharmaceutical prescriptions or were unlocked by some spiritual combination that only an initiated few can know.

* * *

RICHES -- SPIRITUAL

2126 -- THE TASK

A man had built a prosperous business through zealous toil and honest dealings. As he advanced in age, he felt concerned about the future of his enterprise because he had no close relatives except three nephews. One day he summoned the young men and said, "I have a problem, and whoever comes up with the best solution will inherit all that I possess." Giving each of them an equal sum of money, he instructed them to buy something that would fill his large office. "Spend no more than I've given you," he directed, "and be sure you're back by sunset." All day long his nephews sought to fulfill their mission. Finally, when the shadows lengthened, they obediently returned to make their report. Their uncle asked to see their purchases. The first dragged a huge bale of straw into the room. When it was untied it made a pile that nearly hid two of the walls. After it was cleared away, the second brought in two large bags of thistle-down, which when released, filled three-fourths of the room. This was even better than the first. The third nephew stood silent and forlorn. "And what have you to offer?" asked his aged relative. "Uncle, I spent half of my money to feed a hungry child and gave almost all the rest to the church. With the little I had left, I bought these matches and a small candle." Then he lit the taper, and its light filled every corner of the room! The kindly old man realized that here was the noblest of them all. He blessed him for making the best use of his gift and gave him all his possessions.

* * *

RICHES -- SPIRITUAL

2127 -- THE WORLD'S LARGEST SAPPHIRE

Roy Whetstone purchased a stone "from an amateur collector at an Arizona mineral show for \$10,00," according to "Newsweek," Nov. 24, 1986. It has since been "valued at as high as \$2.28 million" and declared to be the world's largest sapphire.

Western-world Christians have in their possession a precious gem of far greater value which many treat just as cheaply. They fail to avail themselves of the joy such wealth could bring them, fail to share it with their own families, and even fail to carry it with them to the house of God. They leave it lying wherever it happened to be the last time the furniture was dusted under newspapers and magazines. If it were stolen, they probably would not miss it for a month.

There are multitudes in many parts of the world who would gladly give a month's salary, go for days without food, and walk great distances to get one copy of the Bible to share with their entire fellowship.

Let's not be too quick to cast aspersions upon the intelligence of the amateur gem collector.

* * *

RICHES -- SPIRITUAL

2128 -- VALUE OF THE INCARNATION UNRECOGNIZED

The "Associated Press" tells of a small Baltimore congregation that found an answer to its financial troubles -- hanging in the church. And it had been there for more than 25 years! The discovery came at a critical time, because inflation and a declining membership had left the church's future in doubt. But someone noticed that in the chapel was a piece of art that depicted the annunciation: the angel telling Mary she would give birth to the Son of God. It turned out to be a valuable woodblock print by Albrecht Durer, dated 1493. Some members expressed disbelief. They said in effect, "If it were real, why would it be hanging here?"

The event announced on that woodblock print is often treated with the same kind of underestimation by God's people. Yet the value of Jesus' birth is more than enough to eliminate the spiritual poverty that faces so many congregations. The truth that God came to earth in human form is reflected in the art, the hymnbooks, and the Bibles used by these churches. The significance of Christ's incarnation, however, goes unrecognized. Instead, attention is given to activities, strategies, and futile discussions that fail to consider the immeasurable worth of knowing who that baby was.

* * *

RIFTS

2129 -- IF -- IN THE MIDDLE OF RIFT

There is an "if" in the middle of "rift". If one allows satan to do so, he will cause a root of bitterness to spring up, even out of the heart of one who had been sanctified. However, when satan "goes on a tear," like the lion that roared against Samson, seeking to rip things apart spiritually, happy is he who so maintains his charity for all the brethren, unity with all the brethren, and equanimity among all the brethren. When there is a time of division, it is possible that "Out of the eater (shall come) forth meat, and out of the strong (differences shall come) forth sweetness" in the souls of those who remain sanctified. Judges 14:14 Consider the following adaptation of Rudyard Kipling's poem "If":

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you..
If you can trust (The Lord) when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too..
If you can wait and not be tired of waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated don't give way to hating..
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken,
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,

And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools..
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you..
If all men count with you, but none too much..
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run..
Yours is God's Heaven and everything that's in it,
And, which is more, you'll be a sanctified, man, my son.

-- Duane V. Maxey

* * *

RIGHT OF A MAN -- GOD DEFENDS

2130 -- MR. DISTRICT ATTORNEY

I remember as a lad away from the Lord of listening to a radio program entitled: "Mr. District Attorney." The District Attorney would say: "And it shall be my duty as District Attorney, not only to prosecute to the limits of the law, (the criminals in the district) but also to uphold with equal fervor the rights and privileges of all its citizens." God not only prosecutes to the limit of the law, those who impenitently continue in sin, but He also upholds with equal fervor the rights of every individual. -- Duane V. Maxey

* * *

RIGHTEOUSNESS -- COMMANDED

2131 -- FROM WASHINGTON'S FINAL PUBLIC SPEECH

"Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens." -- George Washington's final public speech, Sept. 17, 1796

* * *

RIGHTEOUSNESS -- OF CHRIST

2132 -- CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS, OUR ARK

When I was in Manchester, I went into the gallery one Sunday night to have a talk with a few inquirers, and while I was talking a business man came in, and took his seat on the outskirts of the audience. I think at first he had come merely to criticize, and that he was a little skeptical. At last, I saw he was in tears. I turned to him and said, " My friend, what is your difficulty?" "Well," he said, " Mr. Moody, the fact is, I cannot tell." I said, "Do you believe you are a sinner?" He said, "Yes, I know that." I said, "Christ is able to save you;" and I used one illustration after another, but

he did not see it. At last I used the ark, and I said, "Was it Noah's feelings that saved him? Was it Noah's righteousness that saved him, or was it the ark?" "Mr. Moody," said he, "I see it." He got up and shook hands with me, and said, " Good night; I have to go. I have to go away in the train tonight, but I was determined to be saved before I went. I see it now."

I confess it seemed almost too sudden for me, and I was almost afraid it could not live. A few days after, he came and touched me on the shoulder, and said, "Do you know me?" I said, "I know your face, but do not remember where I have seen you." He said, " Do not you remember the illustration of the ark?" I said, "Yes." He said, "It has been all light ever since. I understand it now. Christ is the ark; He saves me, and I must get inside Him." -- Moody

* * *

RIVERS

2133 -- THE RUNAWAY RIVER

I read recently of a town somewhere in the USA which had been left "high and dry" by a runaway river. For centuries perhaps, that river had run down its traditional channel. The town grew up beside it, and fishermen who came to fish in the river brought a good business to the town. No one apparently expected that river to do anything but go on flowing down its accustomed course, but the river surprised them. One day it began cutting a new channel above the town, and soon the stream circumvented the town, leaving its people in consternation. Faced with the loss of income from the fishermen and every other benefit which the town had been accustomed to receive from the presence of the flowing stream, some talked about going upstream to dynamite the river back into its traditional course. From what I remember reading, I think there may have been a legal question as to whether they had the right to do that. Brethren, I don't know what has happened about that river. I suspect that the renegade stream may still be happily flowing down its newly cut channel, and the crestfallen citizens of that town, no longer able to bait, are debating how to get the runaway river back into their own channel. Meanwhile, the attention of the fishermen has perhaps been shifted "from the channel" that once was "to the stream" that now is -- flowing through newly cut banks. Need one make the spiritual application? If we assume that the Spirit of God will only, always, flow through our own traditional riverbed and banks of separation, and if we focus primarily on the channel instead of the stream, then we too may find ourselves "high and dry" spiritually, abandoned by the Living Stream of God's Spirit. Our surprise at His unexpected departure from our private, prejudiced channel could be followed as well by the realization that there isn't enough dynamite on earth to turn Him back into our dried-up waterway. Unable to bait any more spiritual business, and engrossed in debate about who has the water rights, we may forlornly watch as the crowd of spiritual fishermen abandon us, the channel that once was, for the stream that now is. -- Duane V. Maxey

* * *

ROSE OF SHARON

2134 -- DON'T FORGET THE BEST

In their vain rush to get more and more fleshly pleasures and material possessions, the world overlooks the best prize we can ever obtain in this life -- Jesus, The Rose of Sharon:

There is an ancient Scottish legend that tells the story of a shepherd boy tending a few straggling sheep on the side of a mountain. One day as he cared for his sheep he saw at his feet a beautiful flower -- one that was more beautiful than any he had ever seen in his life. He knelt down upon his knees and scooped the flower in his hands and held it close to his eyes, drinking in its beauty. As he held the flower close to his face, suddenly he heard a noise and looked up before him. There he saw a great stone mountain opening up right before his eyes. And as the sun began to shine on the inside of the mountain, he saw the sprinkling of the beautiful gems and precious metals that it contained.

With the flower in his hands, he walked inside. Laying the flower down, he began to gather all the gold and silver and precious gems in his arms. Finally with all that his arms could carry, he turned and began to walk out of that great cavern, and suddenly a voice said to him, "Don't forget the best."

Thinking that perhaps he had overlooked some choice piece of treasure, he turned around again and picked up additional pieces of priceless treasure. And with his arms literally overflowing with wealth, he turned to walk back out of the great mountainous vault. And again the voice said, "Don't forget the best."

But by this time his arms were filled and he walked on outside, and all of a sudden, the precious metals and stones turned to dust. And he looked around in time to see the great stone mountain closing its doors again. A third time he heard the voice, and this time the voice said, "You forgot the best. For the beautiful flower is the key to the vault of the mountain."

* * *

RULERS -- WARNINGS TO

2135 -- SEEN AS AN ACT OF GOD

What did King Nebuchadnezzar of ancient Babylon and Nikolai Ceausescu of present day Romania have in common? Both were ruthless dictators who fell after boldly exalting themselves.

Nebuchadnezzar brazenly declared that he had built the great city of Babylon by his own power and for the honor of his majesty. God humbled him by driving him into the wilderness with a mental illness.

Ceausescu, after years of cruelly persecuting Christians and killing all potential threats to his power, instructed the National Opera to produce a song in his honor that included these words: "Ceausescu is good, righteous, and holy." He wanted this song to be sung on his 72nd birthday on January 26, 1990, but on December 25, 1989, he and his wife were executed.

Although his overthrow was part of the anti-Communist revolution that swept through eastern Europe, many Christians see his sudden downfall as an act of God. One Romanian, Peter Dugulescu, said that it was "because he took for himself the glory of God." -- Kindred Spirit Magazine

* * *

RUNNING THE RACE

2136 -- RUNNING AS IF YOUR LIFE WAS AT STAKE

"So run that ye may obtain the prize" We should run the Christian race with sobriety, for our eternal life is at stake. Let others pursue for enjoyment what they will, but in our race everything vital is at stake. The eternal consequences of losing should motivate us to a greater effort than that put forth by those making sport. -- Duane V. Maxey

Recently I read a fable about a dog who loved to chase other animals. He bragged about his great running skill and said he could catch anything. Well, it wasn't long until his boastful claims were put to the test by a certain rabbit. With ease the little creature outran his barking pursuer. The other animals, watching with glee, began to laugh. The dog excused himself, however, by saying, "You forget, I was only running for fun. He was running for his life!"

That does make a difference! Motivation is the most important factor in everything we do.

* * * * *

THE END